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# THE NEW REPUBLIC

*A Journal of Opinion*

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## The Axis Is Checked

Momentarily the Axis is stalled in its winter campaign. After more than two weeks of war against Greece, the intended victim, with British help, has thrown back the aggressor with heavy losses. Hitler of course cannot afford to let the Greeks win if he is to make progress toward the oil of the Near East which will be necessary to victory in a long war. But he cannot carry forward his part of the campaign without going through Bulgaria, and Turkey has many times firmly stated that this would bring her into the war. The German army would probably not be unwilling to take on even so able an adversary, because the Turks, brave as they are, are ill prepared for modern warfare. But there is uncertainty about the USSR's position. It disliked Germany's advance into Rumania and certainly would not care to see Hitler established at the Dardanelles. And so he has not moved, hoping to assure himself of neutrality on the part of Russia.

Meanwhile other events have proved unfavorable. Mr. Roosevelt was reëlected President of the United States. General deGaulle has won Gabon in French West Africa. It is reported that General Weygand will not support the German scheme to make peace with Vichy at the expense of the colonial empire, and so the ambitious effort came to nothing. How soon can the Axis chariot begin to roll again?

## Nature Helps the Allies

At the time when Mussolini might most want help from his Axis partner, Nature stepped in and added to the Axis troubles with a violently pro-British earthquake in Rumania. Reports of the damage done to vital Rumanian oil fields were various, but it was generally agreed to be serious and widespread. Certainly Nature proved herself a master of timing. To destroy invaluable miles of railroads when they were most needed to support a Nazi threat against Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey would, in the heyday of Greece and Rome, have packed such a punch as an omen that the Axis would have collapsed instantly. As it is, we cannot yet predict the long-term effect of the earthquake; we can only hope that its immediate effect will be seriously to disrupt the march of the legions to the East.

## Can the Bear Be Trapped?

The most critical obstacle to the schemes of Hitler and Mussolini is being attacked in the negotiations with Premier Molotov of the Soviet Union at Berlin. No doubt the Nazis hope to clear the way for their advance into the Near East by buying Stalin off. The question is whether they can offer a high enough price. Among the bids mentioned is a free hand in Iran with access to the Persian Gulf, representation on an "internationalized" control of the Dardanelles (which Germany would dominate), extension of Soviet control to all of Tsarist Poland, further concessions of Rumanian territory, a non-aggression pact with Japan.

Stalin is perfectly willing to make Soviet hay while the war sun shines. The question is, however, whether he is willing to do so at the cost of greatly strengthening, and perhaps conferring victory upon, his most dangerous potential enemy. One would think he would draw the line at permitting Germany in the Dardanelles if he could possibly help it. One would think he would

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hesitate to see a decisive victory over Britain bestowed on Hitler; what he obviously wants is a long and indecisive struggle. It may be that Molotov will merely play the delaying diplomatic game at which the Russians are past masters, avoiding sharp issues, but declining to be bound to sharp plans.

## The War at Sea

The German warfare against British shipping has taken an ominous turn. Berlin claims that an entire convoy of "fifteen to twenty ships" was destroyed in the North Atlantic by a surface raider and England disputes this only by saying that some of the ships escaped. British losses at the present time are about 12,000 tons a day, twice as much as in the early days of the war, though still much less than the high level of 1917, which was 22,000 tons a day. The British and friendly neutrals have lost in all about 3,400,000 tons out of an available total of about 30,000,000. Germany's position is far better than it was in the previous war, because her submarines can now use French ports, near the British commerce lanes, and cannot be bottled up in the North Sea. Britain also suffers from the defection of the French fleet, and the need for her ships to be in other parts of the world.

In this crisis, aid from the United States is absolutely essential. Wherever we can do so without engaging in belligerent acts, we should take over the British patrol duties and set their ships free. We should, moreover, provide the British navy with a sufficient quantity of American destroyers, or of any other type of vessel needed, to make certain that the German sea warfare is not successful. This is only common sense. The people of the United States have over and over again demonstrated their belief that this country cannot afford to let England be defeated. If we really mean what we say, no sacrifice to ensure British success is too great.

## No Inflation Yet

The most serious warning conveyed to the New Deal in Mr. Willkie's speech was that concerning inflation. The inflation bogey has been pumped up so many times by opponents of the administration, and on such dubious grounds, that we are likely to ignore the real danger when it comes, if we do not understand it. This time Mr. Willkie was more nearly right than Republican spokesmen usually are, but not entirely so.

The gold policy of the administration does not directly threaten inflation, nor does its long record of deficit financing or the expansion of the national debt. The basic economic fact, overlooked by most lay discussion of this subject, is that no country can experience a serious inflation until its industrial capacity is fully engaged and unemployment has virtually disappeared. We have for years been a long way from that point, and in such a case easy monetary policies and governmental spending are an aid to recovery.

With the progress of the defense program, however, the situation is likely to change. Industrial production is rising rapidly and unemployment is shrinking. If we arm vigorously enough we shall eventually reach the point of full capacity and shortages of commodities. Then is the time to pay for spending as fully as possible by taxation, to exercise curbs on the use of credit for nonessential purposes, and to place rigid price controls on essential goods.

That wise citizens do not see any near approach of inflation is shown by the fact that high-grade bonds, with their fixed yields, are still selling at a premium.

## Mr. Ford's Juicy Plum

Henry Ford has been given a contract for military airplane engines amounting to $122,000,000. The Ford organization is large, well equipped and experienced; the country's need of engines is desperate. That is a combination hard to resist. Nevertheless, we feel it should have been resisted long enough to compel Mr. Ford to change his attitude toward his workers and toward the United States government, which he has openly and persistently defied. It is not a very auspicious start in a struggle for democracy to give way abjectly to one of the leading anti-democrats of the American industrial hierarchy.

## Will John L. Lewis Resign?

On the eve of the CIO Convention at Atlantic City, November 18, interest still centered on the question whether John L. Lewis would live up to his promise and resign his post as chairman. The convention committees named by him were packed heavily with spokesmen for the strongly pro-Lewis United Mine Workers and the left-wing unions, often charged with being under Communist control. In spite of this, Washington commentators insisted that Lewis would make good on his promise and get out. He still would have his job as head of the UMW, at a huge annual salary.

It was assumed that any successor would have to be a man acceptable both to Lewis and his opponents. Philip Murray of the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee would fill this qualification; he is an intelligent and high-minded labor leader. There was some question as to what Mr. Lewis' successor, if any, would live on, since the post normally pays no salary, but this is a matter that could be arranged if Lewis himself were willing. We see no reason, after a week's reflection, to change the opinion expressed in our issue of November 11, that Lewis has put himself in a position where his continuance in office would do the labor movement far more harm than good.

## Chamberlain Still Lives

On the death of Neville Chamberlain at the end of a tragic career of failure, the newspaper editors in his own country have evidently tried to comment in as

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kindly a manner as possible. It is well to be generous with a defeated leader, once his power to harm has been removed. It is not, however, an unnecessary injury to his memory but a warning to those who survive him if we remember the fatal errors which he symbolized. Responsibility for those errors was not his alone, but was shared by his predecessors, his party, a large section of the British public, and many like-minded men in other nations.

The most obvious was failure to recognize early enough the threat which Hitler embodied and the power that he could muster. Another was a misjudgment of the whole Nazi character and program, so that it was possible to believe in the efficacy of appeasement. More fundamental, however, and less generally recognized, were the stolid conservative traits, combined with unrealistic optimism, which produced a world in which Hitler could arise, which failed to see that democracy could not be preserved unless its revolutionary implications were realized throughout the world, which declined to accept the eternal imperative of growth and change. Though Chamberlain has gone, these reactionary traits survive in all too many of us.

## Nehru Goes to Jail

The British government at present speaks to America with a divided voice. On the one hand we are told that Britain is fighting for democracy, that her own class distinctions are being swept away, that she looks forward to a future of widespread equality. On the other hand, she refuses to give India the freedom that was promised twenty-three years ago in the midst of an earlier war. The greatest active Indian leader, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, has been sentenced to four years in prison at the beginning of the limited campaign of civil disobedience. Under the Defense of India Act, to make a pacifist speech in India means instant arrest, with the probability of a long prison term. India certainly does not want to be thrown to the totalitarian wolves; she wants Britain to win the war and is prepared to help substantially in that effort. Already the Indian contribution is a huge one, as it was in 1914-18. Yet British policy toward India seems without a spark of enlightenment, understanding or justice. The truth is that within the British government itself there is a division of counsel. Men like Mr. Churchill and Lord Halifax can apparently imagine no alternative to terrorization. That such a policy does Britain harm in American eyes does not need to be underlined. It is clearer every day that it does the British government harm in the eyes of its home population as well.

## Good Sense from Distinguished Catholics

It is interesting news that a group of distinguished American Catholics should have joined in a public statement pledging their support to Great Britain in the present war. There have been repeated charges that powerful elements in the Catholic Church are opposed to the democracies and in certain cases—Spain for instance—Rome has certainly made itself the silent partner of Hitler and Mussolini. The public document mentioned will help dispel the notion that the Church is unanimous in its position. It is a striking coincidence that it should be published immediately after President Roosevelt's reëlection in a campaign in which many influential Catholics supported Mr. Willkie.

## Editorial Boom

In reviewing the more satisfactory election results mention should certainly be made of the victory of Alfred M. Bingham, editor of Common Sense. Running on the Democratic ticket Mr. Bingham was elected to the Connecticut State Senate by the twentieth, or "Shoestring," District. Campaigning on a program of extending New Deal domestic policies in Connecticut, he won by 168 votes out of about 19,000 cast.

Mr. Bingham's achievement was a double one. First, his district hadn't been carried by a Democrat since 1912. Second, in winning he surely equaled any records set by previous editors of a liberal journal. With Robert Morss Lovett, formerly of The New Republic, government secretary of the Virgin Islands and Mr. Bingham a state senator, we feel our stock rising every bit as impressively as a shareholder's in Bethlehem Steel.

## Other People's Money

With this issue, a familiar department heading, Other People's Money, disappears from the pages of The New Republic. We hope and trust it does not mean the future absence from our pages of Mr. John T. Flynn, who has written this department for many years. Since Mr. Flynn began his column, because of the SEC and for other reasons, many of the evils in Wall Street which he attacked have been much ameliorated or have disappeared. (Mr. Flynn's own telling strokes have helped to bring this about.) Lacking sufficient material for a weekly column on the original subject, Mr. Flynn has ranged far afield and has frequently collided head-on with the views of the editors, to the annoyance of some readers, the pleasure of others and the bewilderment of many. We are asking Mr. Flynn to write longer articles, to appear in larger type, on his original theme whenever he feels he has something to say. We hope it will be often.

## News Notes of a Week

The British celebrated Armistice Day by shooting down thirteen Italian and fourteen German raiders over the Thames estuary. . . . In the longest raid of the war, the RAF bombed Danzig just before Premier Molotov's arrival in East Prussia. . . . Rumors of a Cabinet shake-up, with Anthony Eden replacing Viscount Halifax, were denied in London. . . . Naval

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and air bases continued to be an international topic. Bases in Eire were denied to the British, Latin American bases reported promised for possible use by the United States, and an agreement on joint Anglo-American use of the Singapore base was forecast from London. . . . Italy's setback in the invasion of Greece was described by The New York Times's correspondent as a disruption of 10 percent of her Albanian forces. . . . The German charge that the English withstand air-bombing because they are masochists and like it, has now been withdrawn. The English resist because they have a fortunate strain of German blood.

A United States freighter was sunk in Australian waters, presumably by a mine. . . . Canadian and United States authorities will meet to arrange curbs for the passage of spies across their border. . . . Mayor LaGuardia announced the continuation of the National Committee of Independent Voters to "keep the people informed accurately on federal problems." . . . Secretary Ickes charged that the election showed the lack of "a truly free press." . . . The Tacoma Narrows Bridge, third largest suspension bridge in the world, crashed into Puget Sound.

## Limits of Unity

THE CAMPAIGN for national unity which began as soon as the election was over expressed a natural feeling and a praiseworthy desire. But neither this nation nor any other can long have simple, undifferentiated unity in any literal sense. We resolve to be united and strong in the face of the common enemy; we desire to work together toward goals commonly sought. Good. We ought to be able to do these things. But dissents are bound to arise about the facts, about interpretation of the facts, about the best policies to pursue in order to gain the ends agreed upon. Disagreement may also exist about the ends themselves. Unity, in order to be wholesome, must be large enough to include and cope with such variety. To accomplish this is the essence of the political job of democracy.

Real danger may come from a fervent plea for unity which ignores these inevitable differences. It is likely, on the one hand, to brand every honest disagreement as treachery to the mystic union of the people under the national leader, and so to lead to suppression of opinion, persecution of minorities and the rigid mold of totalitarian dictatorship. But in America now it is still more likely to lead the executive, though he represents a majority, to be so fearful of exacerbating powerful minorities that in the effort to avoid internal strife he sacrifices national interest and leaves the country a prey to an enemy with stronger purpose.

These dangers may be avoided only by the exercise of sufficient intelligence and good will on the part of all concerned. The requisite principles are clear enough. Mr. Willkie in his radio speech to his followers stated most of them. This is a nation which is ruled by the majority will. The executive and the legislative officials representing the majority must be scrupulously obeyed by the dissenting minority, at least so long as their power is constitutionally exercised. Under our Constitution, with a chief executive independent of the legislature, we cannot have a true coalition government, since any representatives of the minority appointed by him must be his legal subordinates. We are content to accept this state of affairs only because every minority has the right to criticize, to seek popular support, to vote against those in office, and periodically, if it can become strong enough, to convert itself into the majority. The minority has a patriotic function—that of submitting the government to continual scrutiny and criticism. It has an equally patriotic duty—to avoid advancing its cause by unscrupulous or ill tempered opposition which weakens the nation as a whole.

To all this we would add two essential points, almost ignored by Mr. Willkie. First, in time of peril there is an inevitable and necessary tendency to strengthen the powers of the executive and add to the functions of the central government. This happened during the American Revolution, under Lincoln, and again in 1917. No war can be waged successfully without vigorous command, and under modern conditions no adequate preparation for war can be made without a large amount of central economic planning and control. Any patriotic minority is under obligation to admit this fact. Second, while we maintain the right of the minority to criticize, we also grant the majority the right to answer the criticism, to point out frankly the mistakes of the minority, and to proceed vigorously according to its own lights. There is no democratic obligation to submit to rule by the minority. And the only political weakness greater than lack of an alert and vocal minority is a government that is intimidated by its opposition into failure to act.

So far, this discussion may sound abstract, but it has an important specific application. The major division between majority and minority in recent years in the United States has been between those who distrust business in government and those who want great business and financial interests to sit in the seats of power. This difference was dramatized again in the recent election; big business put forth its representative in Mr. Willkie, and lost. Business of course has not given up its struggle and could not be expected to do so. Under a democratic system it has a right to plead its case. Mr. Willkie's Armistice-night speech was, in the main, a reassertion of its point of view.

We believe, however, the real issue is now being obscured in one essential particular, as it was during the campaign. The Republican spokesmen are in the habit of talking as if an increased use of governmental

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power were endangering the liberties of all, when as a matter of fact they have chiefly in mind the curbs it places on government by business. They also talk as if they expected to reduce the scope and power of political government—to the unexpressed end that business itself may expand its sway. Ordinarily this is just what they would try to do. Their usual presidential ideal is a Coolidge who is as penurious and inactive as possible, and is impervious to demands for social reform. At present, however, the more intelligent business forces know well that the international peril and the defense program necessitate a great concentration of economic power in the federal government. This tendency, much as they dislike it, they have been taught by experience is inevitable in situations like the present. It is therefore more than ever important to them to get into positions of power in Washington, so that they themselves may control the centralized economic machinery. By so doing they can resist any very drastic changes, and they can be prepared to scrap the whole system of planning when the emergency passes.

The effort to achieve this end by a national election has failed. But more subtle efforts to achieve it started long before the campaign and are now likely to be redoubled. While Mr. Willkie vocalizes on the outside his opposition to non-business control of our economy, business men achieve positions of power in the defense organization itself. The argument for national unity is a strong asset in this endeavor. Must not business coöperation be sought? And who is better fitted to enlist it than business men themselves? In the important decisions having to do with the regulation of prices and profits, control of foreign trade, apportionment of orders and the fixing of priorities among defense demands and civilian use, the voices of special interests are very close to the center. Thus big business is endeavoring to regain in the actual operation of the defense machinery the power it lost to the majority on the political field.

There is no objection whatever to the employment of able and broadminded business men in the organization of our economy for defense, provided they will put the national interest first. Such men are indispensable, and some of them already occupy high positions in the preparedness organization. Unfortunately, however, many of the other type are there as well. We must be prepared for many a struggle on this field between the true national interest and the guardians of private power and profit. It is to this situation that the majority who reëlected President Roosevelt should become alert. The President himself needs to be wary, more wary than he has been in the past, not to allow his constitutional majority to be circumvented in the privacy of the defense lobbies. For there is at stake not merely the reforms of the New Deal or the rights of labor or the welfare of the farmers. The safety of the whole people itself hangs upon the issue of full, rapid, coördinated and efficient production. And this cannot be achieved—as has been proved in France and Britain—by private-property interests that identify the national welfare with their own traditional prerogatives. The whole future of democracy in the world depends upon the vigor and skill with which the power of the majority to mobilize private industry for national purposes is exercised in this crisis.

## What the Election Proved

A WEEK's additional time has not altered the general outline of the election visible the morning after the votes were counted. Mr. Willkie finally captured Michigan, by a margin so narrow that an official recount might put the state in the Roosevelt column again. Even without it, the President had more than 26,360,000 votes, with 449 in the electoral college. Mr. Willkie's 21,876,000 earned him only 82 electoral votes. To be sure, in many states the margin was a narrow one—so narrow that the Republicans promptly began to talk of a constitutional amendment abolishing the electoral college. They argued that only 400,000 votes, properly distributed, would have given Willkie the election. To this Roosevelt partisans replied that less than 200,000 votes, properly juggled, would have made the electoral-college result unanimous.

Many thousands of words analyzing the results have been written, but most of them consist of conjecture only. Mr. Roosevelt received a vote smaller by 1,116,000 than he did in 1936, although in these four years the population had grown. You might say if you like that the difference between this year's vote and the figure reached by adding his previous total to the normal Democratic percentage of the natural growth of the population, probably represents the number of people frightened off by the third-term issue. Mr. Willkie got more votes than Landon did, by about 5,197,000. It would be logical to assume that many of these represented people who ordinarily do not bother to vote but came out this time, perhaps having been frightened by the Republicans into believing that the "American way of life" was at stake. Regarding a few other factors in the election we can be somewhat more definite.

*The Big City Machines.*—The Democratic machines in the big cities, such as New York, Chicago and Jersey City, did much worse for the Democratic ticket than had been predicted. In New York the experts agree that Tammany deliberately betrayed the President, probably because of the puzzling but strong opposition to him of certain elements of the Catholic Church. Modern conditions are weakening the control by political machines. The WPA can do more for the poor

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man in a month than Tammany or any similar machine can do in a year. More working-class voters can read and write English than formerly, and the number of radio sets now just about equals the number of homes. If the honest and respectable Democrats in these Northern cities would get together to smash the machines, they would have a good fighting chance of victory.

*How Did Labor Vote?* – The American Labor Party made an impressive showing in New York State, with 422,000 votes. Since Mr. Roosevelt carried New York by only about 230,000 the labor support gave him that state, whose forty-seven electoral votes are the largest single bloc in the nation. There was no definite proof anywhere that John L. Lewis succeeded in changing a single labor vote from Roosevelt to Willkie by his radio appeal; beyond doubt the overwhelming majority of CIO members supported the President. It will be weeks before we find out accurately what was the vote of the Communist and Socialist Parties, but it was undoubtedly small. Those parties were kept off the ballot in numerous states. In one case in New York a candidate with Communist support and also that of the Democratic Party actually ran 26,000 votes behind the rest of the ticket.

*The Hyphenates.* – As was predicted, the voters who are influenced by Nazism and fascism went down the line for Willkie, despite his earnest repudiation of their support. In New York, for example, one Italian-American district after another showed an abnormally high Republican vote. The experts believe that Willkie's victory in Michigan may have been due to Father Coughlin, who is stronger there than elsewhere. German sentiment may have had something to do with the Republican victory in Nebraska, which has a far larger proportion of Germans than do the states north and south of it, and many more Germans than people from any other European country.

*What Happened in the Farm States?* – Six of Willkie's ten states were the solid bloc of the Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa and Colorado. Why did these states, which have benefited so hugely from the farm program, vote against the Democrats? Political experts on the spot say they were really protesting the drought, which has afflicted them for seven years. As mentioned above, the German influence may have helped in certain areas. This region is the traditional home of isolationism, and may have felt that while both candidates advocated "interfering in Europe's affairs" Roosevelt was more sincere about it than Willkie. The most sensible guess, to us, seems to be that the New Deal has made the farmers sufficiently prosperous so that they felt they could afford to return to their normal habit of mind. Every one of these states went Republican in 1928, 1924, 1920 and most elections before that back to the Civil War.

*The Discriminating Voter.* – There is a good deal of evidence from this election that people are splitting their tickets and in general voting with more individual initiative and discretion than in the past. In New York City, for example, they chose President Roosevelt overwhelmingly yet defeated the attack of the Democratic machines in the city on proportional representation. In Wisconsin they chose Roosevelt for President but sent La Follette back to the Senate over the opposition of many leaders of the Wisconsin Democratic machine. It is worth noting that the most successful single job done on behalf of Mr. Roosevelt seems to have been the effort of the Norris-LaGuardia Committee of independent liberals. This group operated on a rather high level of intelligence and with conspicuous success. It is good news that it will be continued, to fight for a liberal attitude within the New Deal as it has fought for maintenance of the New Deal itself.

*What the Election Proved.* – It is not correct to say that this election was an issue between city dwellers and farm regions, and that the city dwellers won. While the President carried almost every city in the United States with a population of 400,000 or over, Mr. Willkie was victorious in numerous communities not very much smaller, and the President showed larger strength than expected in many rural regions. It is true, however, that a surprisingly large majority of the working people of the country seems to have voted for him. They, and the rest of the 26,000,000, refused to be frightened by the worst campaign of alarmism in this generation. They voted for the future, as against the past; for the man who has become a symbol of the hopes of democracy throughout the world.

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# The Men Who Make the Future

## I. *The Scientists Look at Our World*

*Is the human race degenerating, mentally or physically or both? Is the strain of modern life proving too much for our minds and bodies?*

*Are we endangering our civilization by recklessly using up the world's supply of irreplaceable raw materials?*

*Are we being destroyed by technology, which puts terrible new weapons into the hands of contemporary barbarians? Is the scientific achievement of the totalitarian states outstripping our own?*

*Or on the contrary, does science reaffirm the democratic way of life? And if so, how? Are we on the verge of important new discoveries that will vastly increase the satisfactions of man's existence, and if so, what are they?*

THESE are arresting questions; probably no one can answer them with complete authority. I can at present, however, offer what seems to me important testimony on these and related subjects.

During the past few weeks I have had an extraordinary experience. I have talked with a rather large group of the top men of research in the physical sciences in the United States—and in most fields that means, nowadays, in the whole world. Speaking to them one by one, in their own laboratories, I asked each a long series of searching questions, not primarily about the technical details of his work but about its broad implications, the social philosophy that arises from it. Nearly all these men—Nobel Prize-winners, heads of departments in great universities, directors of research for big industrial corporations—have a life-long rule against giving interviews, but they talked with me freely on the understanding that they would not be quoted by name. The result has been, for me, an amazing "guided tour" to the very frontiers of human knowledge.

In the series of articles of which this is the first, I shall try to make a synthesis of the replies to my questions. I must not give the impression, however, that these top-ranking research men are unanimous on any subject—even science itself—or that any of them pretends to be an authority on any matter other than his own specialty. They differ with each other, or they abstain from comment on certain matters, just as anyone else might do. Nevertheless, I feel I have discovered a solid core of doctrine underlying their differences, which I shall attempt to report. While I am seeking conscientiously to summarize their views, I am of course alone responsible for any individual statement.

Let me begin with a quick general summary. The scientists are on the whole optimistic—markedly more so than any of the other groups in the community with whom I have recently come into contact. They do not believe that civilization is perishing, that the Dark Ages are about to return. On the contrary, they think that through the work of science itself, mankind is on the threshold of a new and better existence than ever before. They feel, for example, that most wars nowadays are fought (or so the statesmen say) for reasons that are already partly obsolete and will soon be almost entirely so. One important basis for international conflict is the struggle for raw materials and natural resources many of which we are already able to reproduce artificially in the laboratory. It is always stupid for men to kill each other; but it becomes doubly foolish when they do so for the possession of things that they can easily and abundantly obtain in other ways.

The scientists, with almost no exceptions, believe firmly in democracy as the only possible way of life. They consider that one of the most important things in human experience is the search for truth, and they know that this is only possible when "the winds of freedom blow." It was the liberalism that came to Europe in the eighteenth century that made possible the great advances of the past one hundred and fifty years—advances far larger and deeper than in all man's previous history on earth. They believe—and have vehemently told me so—that under the totalitarians, with their rigid restrictions on men's minds, their denial that there is any such thing as universal truth (distinct from Nazi or Fascist or Communist truth), progress cannot long continue.

These research experts show little fear that mankind is destroying the irreplaceable raw materials and will some day suffer drastically for this. The reason is that some of these resources have proved to be far greater than was supposed. Not long ago, for example, people were worried lest our oil resources should last only a few years longer; and it is a fact that at the present rate of consumption, oil for gasoline within the United States would be exhausted in about thirty years. But there is enough oil in shale rock (at a somewhat higher cost of extraction) to last three or four thousand years and there is coal enough for two thousand.

Nowadays gasoline can be made from shale rock or coal. Tomorrow its sources may be almost anything containing carbohydrate material. The other day in the laboratory of Dr. Ernst Berl of the Carnegie Institute of Technology I held in my hand a test-tube full of high-grade motor fuel. It had been made from

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molasses. Dr. Berl (who incidentally is a former great Austrian chemist and is a Hitler refugee) can produce the same result from corn, wood, seaweed or leaves. We can also run automobiles on alcohol, and alcohol can be made from corn, molasses, beets, Jerusalem artichokes, sweet potatoes—or for that matter, from petroleum, wood or coal. Moreover, we do not know how much greater efficiency may be achieved in the future from gasoline itself by new methods. Already we have almost tripled the amount of gasoline obtained from a gallon of crude oil, by new types of extraction. The latest "cracking" process, and the addition of ethyl lead, save every year in the United States about one thousand times as much power as is produced by all the vast dams of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

It is true that certain types of waste are just as dangerous as they ever were, or more so. The erosion of our soil is something that would be fatal if it were allowed to go on for another hundred years. Dr. Berl points out that it is foolish to use up irreplaceable materials when we can get the same results by employing products of which nature furnishes us vast quantities fresh every year. Some few natural metals are still indispensable. But broadly speaking, science is now prepared to make an amazing list of things out of something else, and to guarantee that they will be just as good or better.

The new soilless agriculture, in which plants are grown in water or in fine sand to which the proper chemicals have been added, is already capable of being applied on a broad scale by any government which sincerely feels that its neighbors are not giving it sufficient breathing space. Only 12 percent of the world's land area is at present under cultivation (much of the remainder of course being mountains, deserts, Arctic wastes or otherwise unusable). If this land were all tilled with the methods now in use in the most advanced countries, the whole world could be fed—at a better standard than is now possible in many regions—on only one-half of the present area. Put it another way: the present world population of two billion people could safely be doubled without adding a single acre to the amount of land already under cultivation. The scientists recognize that there is a limit to the total population the earth can support; and they recognize too that there is doubtless an optimum number of people for each country, far short of the limit. But, they say, the ideas of the past on this subject are now known to have been greatly inadequate, and they suspect that present views may also be subject to revision in the future.

Already a beginning has been made at the production of artificial foods; in Germany in particular, sugars have been produced from wood and edible fats from coal, though so far as is known, they have not yet been fed to human beings except in limited laboratory experiments. (Goering recently announced that the delay is only for psychological reasons: to feed synthetic fats would not be "good propaganda.") This does not mean we are approaching the time so often predicted by newspaper humorists when your dinner would consist of one pink pill and one blue one; the human body is designed to consume its food in bulk and must continue to do so. It does mean that we have only reached the shore of what is probably a vast sea of knowledge regarding foods.

Everyone now knows about the vitamins, those minute but all important chemical elements in our food without which life is impossible. Unwittingly, the march of civilization in recent years has resulted in reducing the vitamin content of many familiar foods—ordinary white bread being one example. We have learned now to restore these vitamins, to the great benefit of our health; some of them, such as Vitamin B1 (thiamin chloride), can be manufactured as entirely synthetic chemical compounds. The scientists are just beginning to work on the question whether our modern methods have not taken away from our foods precious minerals as well. They hope to know in the near future whether the fertilizer employed on heavily used fields ought to include about sixteen mineral compounds instead of the present customary three or four, so that we can be sure of getting from fruits, vegetables or other plants from those fields, or from animal products based upon them, the maximum nourishment for the human organism.

Said one brilliant research leader in the field of food chemistry: "Think of the most tireless, inexhaustible person you know—someone who goes day and night and is never fatigued or ill. It is quite possible that that person owes his energy not only to his inherited constitution but also to the fact that instinctively he chooses the vitalizing foods and rejects the others. Nowadays such a person is one in a hundred. We are thinking and working toward the idea that in time we may be able to raise the proportion of such people to twenty in a hundred, then fifty, then perhaps everybody except those who are by heredity deficient in some way."

What interests the scientists today? What are the most exciting new prospects on the horizon? At the moment there are at least five. One is the electron microscope, which raises the limits of magnification almost unbelievably. At present, with ordinary light, objects can be increased in apparent size 2,500 times, with ultra-violet, a little more. The electron microscope magnifies 10,000 to 30,000 times and, with photographic enlargement, 100,000 to 200,000 times. It is quite possible that within a space of a few months or years, a whole series of epochal discoveries may be made in regard to the structure of matter and that important new weapons will be found in man's ceaseless fight against disease in all its forms.

A second subject of close attention is the "physics

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of the nucleus," and especially the cyclotron, the machine for smashing atoms. A giant example of this machine is now under construction at the University of California at Berkeley. It is costing a million and a half dollars, will weigh when completed 4,000 tons and will take three years to build. When it is finished it will direct against the atom an energy of two hundred million electron volts. Vast possibilities are envisioned as rising from these experiments in our knowledge of the structure of matter, in the treatment of disease and in many other fields. We are on the threshold of new worlds here.

A third question of the greatest potential importance is the possible release of the titanic energy locked within the infinitesimally small compass of the atom. The most exciting work is being done in regard to the atoms of the very heavy metal, uranium. The scientists deprecate the rash of publicity that spread over the newspapers on this subject a few months ago, feeling that the public received an exaggerated idea of the progress that has already been made. Nevertheless, they take this progress with deadly seriousness. The amounts of energy-producing substance thus far extracted are still extremely small, but the process has been greatly speeded within the last year or two. No scientist of the group I consulted is prepared to say that atomic energy will be ours in one generation, two generations, or ever. They are equally unwilling to say that we shall not have it in six months or six years.

One does not need to be a scientist to speculate on the future that such release of atomic energy might bring. Limitless quantities of power would be available at a cost so low that for all practical purposes it would be free. Every need of humanity could be supplied, with the use of only a tiny fraction of the human labor that is now employed to satisfy those needs inadequately. It is possible of course that mankind would thereupon all but destroy itself in the last and most frightful of wars; or it might live henceforth in a Utopia like the dreams of Edward Bellamy. At least in the industries where mechanical power is employed, human labor might be limited to a few years of adult life and perhaps only a few hours per day or per week.

A fourth matter to which the scientists are paying close attention is the new development in chemical treatment of illness. Within the past year or two, the magical effects of sulfanilamide in curing a whole series of diseases have been supplemented by the equally astonishing results of sulfapyridine and sulfathiazole. (These drugs can also be dangerous, and need to be employed with the greatest skill and care.) Not since Ehrlich's historic work which resulted in salvarsan has there been any such amazing development as we have lately seen, and it is quite possible, the scientists feel, that what is still to come is more remarkable than what has already been witnessed.

The fifth subject of tremendous immediate interest is the use of colchicine in artificially creating new varieties of plants. Colchicine, a poisonous drug extracted from the roots of the ordinary autumn crocus, can be used on many sorts of vegetation to speed up enormously—perhaps a thousand times—the process of producing "sports"—accidental variations some of which can be perpetuated. The potential results are almost beyond imagination. There is good reason to hope that within a year or two your table will have giant strawberries and blackberries, double the size of any present species, and equal or superior to them in flavor. Radishes the size of turnips are to be expected. Garden flowers such as cosmos, daffodils, petunias, marigolds, zinnias, nasturtiums, larkspur and snapdragon, should soon be available in giant sizes and many new colors. Sugar cane is being bred with stalks several times larger than at present and a higher vitamin content. Tobacco, cotton and many other plants will be larger, finer and more resistant to disease. Here again the almost endless possibilities take your breath away.

These top-rank scientists, immersed as they are in their own researches, are nevertheless keenly alive to the pressing problems of today. One subject I discussed with them at length was the relation of science to our whole economy, and in particular to national defense. Is it true that the regimented science of Germany, conducted in the interest of the state, offers a competition that our laboratory experts cannot meet? What are we doing to make sure that our preparedness effort will take advantage of the latest possible inventions, discoveries and techniques? Has our technology advanced more rapidly than has the power of society to assimilate its results? And if so, would a "moratorium on science" for a few years be desirable? Is much of our present unemployment the result of new inventions, and if so, what should be done about it? I shall report the answers to these questions in my next and succeeding articles.

BRUCE BLIVEN

## Grant Wood's America

He has defined a country of clear edges:
Smooth line that takes the landscape in its arms;
Roofs acute and razor-rounded hedges
On curvilinear farms.

The trees are geometrical in the meadow,
Fruits poised by compass in the measured boughs;
A level light and sharp degree of shadow
Point the conviction of a permanent house.

As here, in such a land, might follow ending
Precise as its incipience; constant fact
Rigid to its design; equity unbending
To the amorphous act.

HORTENSE LANDAUER SANGER

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# Labor Makes Guns

In middle-class mythology, labor is supposed to furnish the brawn in industry, management the brains. It isn't happening altogether that way in the development of the rearmament program. A basic part of our defense planning is coming from the labor unions of the country, represented on the National Defense Advisory Commission by Mr. Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and a group of union chiefs. It is something that may have permanent consequences for our economic life.

Last May, when the present program was being formulated, fears were expressed—especially by the industrial-mobilization division of the War Department—that one of the main obstacles that would have to be surmounted would be a shortage of skilled labor. It was pointed out that heavy industry, ever since 1929, had been limping along on one cylinder. Its skilled workers had had to find other jobs or go on relief; no new men had been trained.

The defense program is now five months old. Already several industries, notably steel, are operating at the highest level of production ever attained. And there has been no shortage of skilled labor. It is generally agreed that no important shortage is discernible in the future. For this achievement, Mr. Hillman and his union colleagues, working with the governmental agencies of the New Deal, are entitled to credit.

But this success, in itself, is less important than the methods by which it is being achieved. What is happening is that Mr. Hillman and his union assistants are instructing corporate management over large sectors of industry in ways to improve production techniques. It is one of the greatest educational jobs ever undertaken. At the moment, another phase of Mr. Hillman's work—his struggle to see that big open-shop concerns like Bethlehem Steel and Ford Motor Company obey the Wagner Act for collective bargaining—is making the headlines. But the reorganization of industry that he is encouraging is equally significant.

The problem that Mr. Hillman and the labor unions have set themselves to solve springs from two facts. The first is that, to fulfill the arms program, certain heavy industries must increase their output two, three, four hundred percent. The second is that there is no time to train new men in the immensely exacting skills these industries demand. For the most part, we must rely on the force of already skilled workers that we have. The task is to improve factory procedures so that their full abilities can be taken advantage of.

"Efficiency," admittedly, has come to have a bad sound in American industrial relations. The efficiency experts of the Harding-Coolidge period were often simply ingenious labor exploiters. It should be unnecessary to explain that the job-planning now being urged by Mr. Hillman's division of the NDAC has no resemblance to that of anti-union employers. The arms program will inevitably make more jobs. One effect of the NDAC's planning will be to make them better jobs that will pay more money.

What actually has been accomplished so far? The NDAC was created toward the end of May. Mr. Hillman was ill, and did not assume his post until some four weeks later, when the cry for skilled labor was reaching its height. He began his work by taking a far-reaching organizational decision: that the NDAC's labor section should do as little as possible itself, that it should rely primarily on governmental agencies either established, or fostered, by the New Deal: the United States Employment Service, the Labor Department's Apprentice Committee, the WPA, the Office of Education, the NYA and the Civil Service Commission. By not attempting to create a bureaucracy of its own, the NDAC's labor division has unquestionably saved months of time.

Mr. Hillman likes to point out that the existence of these agencies, awaiting his hand, is tangible proof of the way in which the New Deal has increased our national strength. "We have been relieved of the necessity of improvising . . ." he told a convention of the Auto Workers soon after his appointment. "Just think of what all this means to us. The existing agencies—all of which were created within the past seven years—have a wealth of knowledge and experience at hand."

The first agency to go into action was the Civil Service Commission. The navy yards, faced with a two-ocean-navy program, were begging for additional workers. The Civil Service Commission fine-tooth-combed its list of eligibles, raised its age limit for skilled men to sixty-two. It distributed red-white-and-blue "Men Wanted" signs to post offices, arranged for plugs in radio programs, even enlisted the help of local police forces. In all, it mobilized 100,000 workers.

Meanwhile, the United States Employment Service stood ready with its monumental register of 5,700,000 workers, of whom 900,000 were found to be skilled, 1,100,000 semi-skilled. The WPA had a "directory of skills" covering 2,500,000 men and women either on its rolls or awaiting assignment to them. The labor unions with memberships in the heavy industries—the auto workers, electricians and machinists—were given what amounted to a detective job, that of rounding up members who had once held skilled posts, but, because of the depression, had shifted to less skilled work. The automobile-assembly lines yielded many men who had once been experienced machine-tool makers.

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During July and August, the NDAC's labor division dealt with requests for workers from "hundreds of companies." Some fifteen thousand workers of specialized experience were mobilized in a two-week period. One of the NDAC's exploits was to ferret out, with union help, men who had training in barrel-rifling in the last war for a company now engaged in the manufacture of machine guns. When it was determined that Wright Aeronautical would expand operations at Paterson, New Jersey, the NDAC arranged for 700 unemployed men to receive "refresher" courses under the WPA. So exactly was the training fitted to the prospective jobs that, six weeks later, all 700 were at work. A special purpose of the NDAC is not to train more workers in a locality than will later be needed. "We do not want to create graduate unemployed," Mr. Hillman says.

At present, the NDAC's labor division is analyzing the outward flow of arms contracts in order to estimate probable future labor demands. The navy yards are expected to need some 36,000 workers of specialized skills. The airplane-engine industry will take on at least 200,000 new workers, of whom some 55,000 will have to be skilled, and 12,000 more capable of becoming straw bosses and supervisors. The aircraft industry proper will expand its present work force of 80,000 to 350,000, of whom 25 percent must be skilled.

But before we go further into the elaborate methods evolved by the NDAC's labor division for recruiting new workers, let us look at its main task—increasing the productive abilities of men already at work. This is comprehended in its "up-grading" program. In the program's development, Mr. Hillman has enlisted the aid of two well known personnel experts, Messrs. Channing R. Dooley of Socony-Vacuum and J. W. Dietz of Western Electric. The NDAC's labor division emphasizes that the program contains little wholly original, that the procedures it recommends have been tested by efficient corporations. A large part of the program, for example, is now used by General Electric, whose former chairman, Mr. Owen D. Young, is acting as Mr. Hillman's assistant on youth training. Recently experience with the "up-grading" program has been had in the machine-tool and optical industries, in both of which the need for skilled labor is acute.

NDAC officials estimate that, in many industries, skilled workers are obliged to spend as much as 85 percent of their time on unskilled, routine tasks. Under the "up-grading" program, each skilled worker is to be provided with a sufficient number of helpers so that all his time can be given to his specialty. This is the "gang-system"; its resemblance, incidentally, to the Stakhanovist technique of Soviet Russia is marked. Along with this reorganization of skilled workers' jobs goes the advancement of semi-skilled workers to more complicated tasks. At the bottom, unskilled workers, instead of being restricted to a single machine operation, are given a chance to see the whole factory process and prepare themselves for the next step upwards.

The NDAC is undertaking to bring this program for economizing the existing skilled labor force to all corporations engaged on arms contracts. The country has been divided into twenty industrial districts, headed by supervisors who will be the NDAC's direct representatives. Each supervisor will have a staff of four—two union men and two employers—and will have at his call a panel composed of local personnel and labor-training specialists. A corporation that believes itself facing a labor shortage will be invited to lay its troubles before its district supervisor. He—or experts from his panel—will aid it in rearranging the job schedules of its skilled workers. If need be, a special, individual program will be drafted. The supervisor will negotiate with schools, or with the WPA or the NYA, for "refresher" courses for once skilled men who are now doing less skilled work. Local unions will be asked to continue their search for candidates for skilled work.

Where the NDAC's resources are likely to be taxed to the utmost will be in the case of wholly new industries—smokeless powder, principal bottleneck of the whole defense program—or industries that are doubling and trebling their production, such as airplanes. Many powder, shell-loading, tank and ordnance plants are to be built in small towns of the South, in the Tennessee Valley or west of the Mississippi. Decentralization of munitions-making is desirable for many reasons, but it has the handicap that these towns usually lack the vestige of a trained labor force. The NDAC's labor division in Washington is carefully watching these trouble spots, and making preparations to cure them. Labor unions and the United States Employment Service's 1,500 local branches are being asked to recruit skilled workers; arrangements will be made to help them move to the proposed factory sites. The WPA, the Office of Education and the NYA will provide the less skilled labor. In general, the Office of Education will be called on where local vocational-school facilities already exist, the NYA where they do not. In the Southern town where the country's largest powder factory is to be built, the schools are understood to be inadequate, and the NYA will be asked to erect several of its recently adopted model residence centers, each providing workshops and dormitories for two hundred young men. Farm boys from perhaps twenty or thirty miles around will be whipped through highly scientific training courses and given jobs.

It is a union maxim that badly run corporations are the worst exploiters of labor, and the most hostile to union organization. As a part of the defense program, an attempt is being made to bring efficient management to a wide sector of American industry. It is being carried out, with President Roosevelt's backing, by labor-union leadership. JONATHAN MITCHELL

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# Russia's "Menace" to Alaska

WASHINGTON DISPATCHES of the past months have reported conversations between the State Department and the Ambassador from the Soviet Union to discuss better understanding between the two countries. These dispatches are in strange contrast to disturbing press reports describing a Soviet press campaign for grabbing Alaska.

One of the most complete statements arrived from Shanghai, signed by Hallett Abend. This appeared in The New York Times of August 11, 1940, and sketched "vast and secret military development" throughout northeastern Siberia, which, "in the opinion of military and naval men here" indicated "a Soviet design against sparsely populated and poorly defended Alaska, which was Russian territory before the United States bought it." It continued: "There is an intensification of the campaign for recovery of rich lands that once belonged to Russia but do not belong to the USSR because they were ineptly lost or corruptly sold later when the dynasty became decadent." Since the only territory that Tsarist Russia ever sold outright was Alaska, the implications are plain.

The signed dispatches of a famous correspondent, printed in a responsible newspaper, are not to be taken lightly, and accordingly two research groups which devote themselves specially to Soviet affairs were consulted. They were the American-Russian Institute and the Institute of Pacific Relations. Both these organizations had been reading Pravda, Izvestia and other Russian-language publications with special reference to Alaska, but had found nothing pertinent. An inquiry to the Library of Congress brought a similar response.

Parallel to, and sometimes connected with, the accounts of the Soviet press campaign for the recapture of Alaska were American newspaper reports of a Soviet enterprise on Big Diomede. These may have begun with a Moscow dispatch to The New York Times dated June 6, 1940. We quote it in full:

> A Soviet Arctic station within one mile of United States territory will shortly be completed, it is announced here. The station will be situated on Big Diomede Island in Bering Strait near Alaska; the island lies less than a mile from Little Diomede Island, owned by the United States.
>
> Last autumn a steamer left for the island from Vladivostok, but storms and ice prevented the landing of her cargo of materials and equipment. Now being transported from the mainland to the island are four scientists who will work at the new station.

The Soviet "Arctic Stations" are primarily observation posts for weather and ice conditions; a few have radios able to communicate with Moscow direct. Weather reports are sent out thrice daily and are also used by our government to forecast American weather. It is in fact hard for our weather bureaus to be reasonably accurate except through Soviet coöperation.

Sometimes these stations have in residence a considerable number of scientists. Large stations may have a dozen magneticians, zoölogists, oceanographers, parasitologists, botanists and the like. There are sometimes one or more airplanes for upper-air observations, for study of ice movement and communication. The stations are visited once or more each year by airplanes. A few are supplied mainly or exclusively thus; but generally by steamers and river boats.

An "Arctic station" defined, we proceed with our quoting. An AP dispatch from Nome, Alaska, published by The Christian Science Monitor on June 18 said that Little Diomede Island Eskimos substantiated reports of Soviet construction of a weather and radio station on Big Diomede Island. They said they watched the arrival of loaded whale boats over a period of weeks. They did not mention a report that the Russians also were building an air field on Big Diomede.

On July 23 dispatches in many newspapers dealt with the swelling gravity of the Diomede situation. PM of that day quoted the AP as saying that extensive Russian military activity was under way on Big Diomede; that submarines, an air base and infantry were included in the "activity" reported, and that officers of the cutter Perseus said both whites and Eskimos on American-owned Little Diomede Island had sighted Russian soldiers on Big Diomede.

By now excitement about a Soviet threat to Alaska was widespread. Articles of alarmist tendency appeared in The New York Daily News, Herald Tribune and Times. On August 20 The World-Telegram began the conspicuous display of a series of illustrated articles by Ludwell Denny, entitled "Danger at Our Back Door." The charges of Russian air and submarine bases on Big Diomede were repeated. But deflation of the big scare was under way even while the World-Telegram series was running. On August 21, New York's PM carried a rewrite paragraph in its department called "In Short": "Alameda, Cal., Aug. 21—After a routine cruise into Alaskan waters, Commander H. G. Bradbury of the Coast Guard cutter Shoshone says reports of Russian military activity on Big Diomede Island were greatly exaggerated."

Through the preceding two months PM had given less space than most other New York papers to the Big Diomede scare, and an examination of the ones which had been more exercised was indicated. There was no success in finding the AP disavowal in The Sun, The World-Telegram, The Post, The Times or The Herald Tribune. A telephone call to The Sun brought the information that a contradiction had been

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carried, but only in the last edition. The rest of the New York papers questioned—World-Telegram, Post, Times and Herald Tribune—said over the telephone that they had not printed the release.

I have seen the full text of the dispatch on which PM's paragraph is based. It flatly denied the stories that Russia is fortifying Big Diomede Island. Commander Bradbury not only said there was no foundation to the rumors, but that no power would undertake to fortify a place so unstrategically located. Big Diomede has no structure on it except a barnlike frame building. It is completely covered with boulders, according to Commander Bradbury, and it would be almost impossible to level the island, let alone to construct a base.

On October 20, Mr. Waldemar Kaempffert, science editor of The New York Times, came to the rescue of his paper with a highly intelligent discussion of the whole affair. So far as I can learn, nobody has followed suit.

VILHJALMUR STEFANSSON

# Security from the Air

IT SEEMS unquestionable that the German air force has now suffered a real defeat. It has not succeeded in destroying London, British communications, the people's morale, the machinery of war production or the fighter squadrons of the RAF. Its losses in daylight mass raids have been so heavy that it has had to abandon or modify this technique and concentrate more on the night bombing that it despised and disliked—and even here the increasing efficacy of the defense is making itself felt.

Conversely, British fighters have established an unquestioned superiority both as regards machines and men, and British bombers, deliberately trained in the technique of night-flying, are damaging military objectives with greater success and slighter losses than the German bombers.

This fact has many obvious and immediate implications. Chief among them, perhaps, is the feeling among the German army leaders that Goering and his boasted *Luftwaffe* have let them down. The invasion of Britain this autumn was a necessity for German plans of complete victory. It could not take place unless the German air force achieved superiority and destroyed a large part of the British. This they failed to do, and not only must the failure be rankling, but it might well develop into a split between the two major components of the Nazi war machine.

There are, however, other implications of even longer range. It is not only the German air force. The *Luftwaffe* is essentially a part of the German army—the army's aerial spearhead—and with its dive-bombers blasts a way for the tanks and troops that it escorts. When it cannot accompany the troops, as now across that unfortunate strip of water, the English Channel, it goes ahead to try to smash resistance out of their way beforehand; and the original theory was to do this by day-fighting in large formations.

The RAF, on the other hand, is an independent service. In place of day dive-bombing in the van of troops, it has from the first trained itself in the difficult technique of night-flying for the attack of key objectives far behind the enemy's lines, and has relied much more on small formations and individual initiative. It has some claim to be considered as an aerial navy, to be used in its own right for the striking of decisive blows. Its military function may be compared with that of the German tanks, operating as independent units, while the *Luftwaffe's* is more that of the French tanks, designed to operate as part of infantry.

The two conceptions of course overlap a great deal in practice; but there is a real distinction between them, and it is perhaps no accident that, in the air as with the tank arm, the conception involving greater freedom, mobility and individual initiative has prevailed.

The fact has long-term consequences. An air force conceived as an aerial navy can take on naval functions in peace as well as war, and in so doing can extend them over new regions.

In the past hundred years, British sea power has been supreme. Consciously or unconsciously, other maritime countries have been sheltered by it and have developed their trade and commerce under its protection. After the collapse of France, America saw the force of this assertion. The same was true of the western seaboard of Europe. The trade of Holland, Norway's mercantile marine, Denmark's agricultural production, France's imperial connections—all developed under the shadow of the British navy. How true this is can be seen from the fate of these countries now they have been overrun by the Nazis and forced into a continental instead of a maritime orbit. Their ports, their trade, their production (based on abundant imports) are being ruined and their whole economy reduced to the colonial level which alone is possible for satellites of a continental *Herrenvolk*.

On the other hand, the countries in the interior of the European land-mass, or those with only small coastlines on inland seas, were in a different category. Czecho-Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, the Balkans, to a certain extent Sweden and Finland—all these, being beyond the reach of the British navy, could not develop in the same way, and were constantly in danger of being squeezed or invaded by one or other of the continental military powers.

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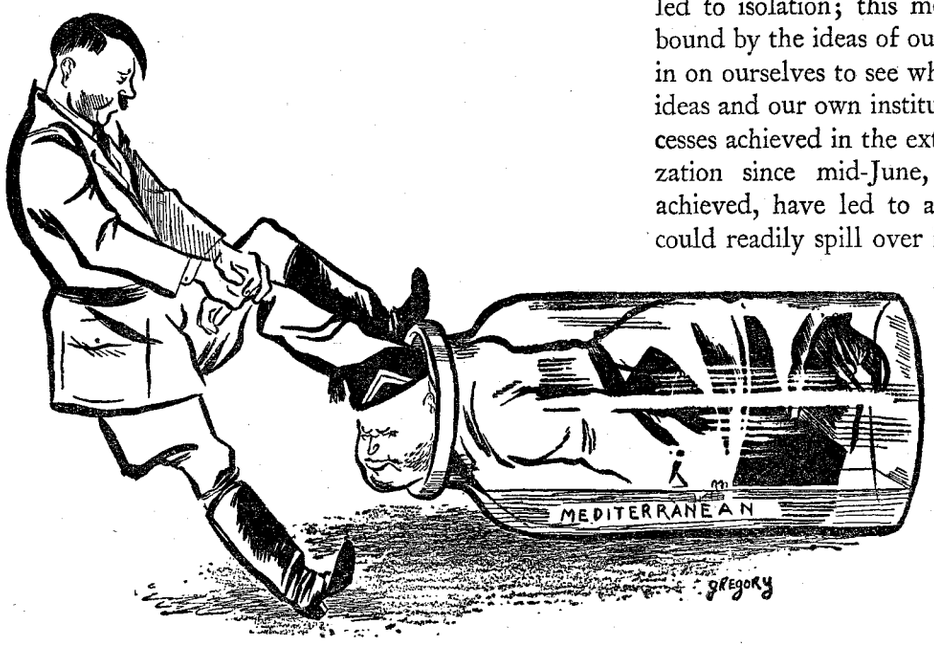
But with the extension of naval functions to an air force, all this is changed. If Britain can really obtain and keep air supremacy, she can extend her type of protection over all of Europe, right up to the borders of Russia. Actually she could never have achieved even the degree of aerial success she has already obtained without the aid of American production, Canadian training facilities and the brilliant Empire pilots. And for the future, American and Empire coöperation will still be very necessary.

There can be very few thinking people who today are not alive to the absolute necessity of some joint security organization in Europe, and one of the necessary ingredients of any such organization would seem to be an international force. Now the greatest difficulty in the way of setting up an International Force that would work as such and not disintegrate into national components, under strain, is the creation of a loyalty and an *esprit de corps* of its own. It is not in the least impossible, as the pessimists maintain, for loyalty and *esprit de corps* to blossom on the international as on the national plane. Various organizations, such as the ILO, have demonstrated the contrary in civil affairs, and there are plenty of military parallels.

What is clear, however, is that it will take time to build up and consolidate the spirit of such a force, especially in peacetime. Most of those in a position to make a pronouncement would ask for fifteen or twenty years; after that, if the force had been properly organized and led, it could be trusted to resist disintegrating tendencies and would constitute a new phenomenon in the political world.

But how to bridge this gap—how nurse the tender plant? Here again it seems clear that we might look to joint British and American power, on the sea and in the air. In particular, Anglo-American air power would provide the umbrella over Europe which would protect the young and growing International Force from the political weather, and allow it to mature and toughen its fibers.




This, it may be said, is asking a great deal, both of Britain and the United States. It perhaps asks less of America. America, on such a view, could be in reserve. It would have to maintain a large and efficient navy and air force, and would have to enter into some working arrangement by which it would support Britain in case of emergency.

Britain, on the other hand, must make up her mind that she will not this time withdraw from the affairs of Europe into insular or imperial isolation, as she did after 1918. She is getting used to the idea that she is a part of Europe—that part of Europe which alone has remained free—and that her job in pushing the war to a successful conclusion consists essentially in bringing back to the rest of Europe freedom and all the traditions of western civilization that are behind it.

She must now accustom herself to the further logical conclusion—that she must continue to act as the main guardian of freedom in a liberated Europe: and to do that she must, for a considerable time, be willing not only to be mixed up in European affairs, but to play the dominant role in them.

This will require effort and sacrifice, and a militant missionary spirit behind the effort. That too is not outside the range of practical possibilities. Britain, since she was left alone by the collapse of France, and especially since her people have realized that they are successfully standing up to Hitler and have upset all the Nazi plans, is developing a much more militant and crusading consciousness. Indeed, it may be argued that, looked at in the very long run, the collapse of France was a good thing, both for Britain and the world. That collapse brought danger, and the danger led to national unity and resolution, and the success so far achieved in overcoming the danger has led to a tempered self-confidence and a sense of mission. The collapse also led to isolation; this meant that we were no longer bound by the ideas of our ally, but were forced to turn in on ourselves to see what we could make of our own ideas and our own institutions; and here again the successes achieved in the extraordinary period of improvization since mid-June, though much remains unachieved, have led to a new confidence which again could readily spill over into a sense of mission.

If we do win the war, it will have been a gigantic task, and Britain will be filled with a new national pride and self-confidence, singularly lacking in the last twenty years, which might readily make it a natural and simple thing for her to assume the leadership of Europe's affairs.

JULIAN HUXLEY

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# Two Eighteenth-Century Careers[1]

## *Daniel Defoe*

DURING the so formative period of young Benjamin Franklin's stay in London in 1725, Daniel Defoe, another man of business who was also a master of English popular writing, was living in suburban retirement at Stoke Newington. Defoe's "Essay on Projects" had been Franklin's favorite reading when he was a boy in Boston, but he has left no record of having seen or heard of Defoe while he was in London. We don't even know whether Franklin read any of the editions of "Robinson Crusoe" that were coming off the press in rapid succession while he was there. Probably the romantic story of the shipwrecked sailor wouldn't have seemed sufficiently instructive to the ambitious young American: after all, desert isles and prints of savage feet were common enough where he came from. But in energy, in diversity of interests and a certain indomitable cheerfulness of outlook there was much in common between them. The difference was that Defoe's career was a series of failures while Franklin's was one of the most successful in history.

It is tempting to speculate on how the men would have turned out if their positions had been reversed: if Franklin had stayed in England, and if, in the course of one of his many difficulties with the police power Defoe had been transported, like so many of the characters of his novels, to America. In spite of the forty-odd-years difference in their ages, there is considerable similarity between the characters and backgrounds of the two men. Between them they pretty well sum up the practical aspirations of English men of business rising up on both sides of the Atlantic at the time.

Defoe, like Franklin, came from the class of dissenting small shopkeepers and artisans. He was the son of a Baptist tallow chandler named Foe who rose in due time to the more respectable occupation of butcher. Daniel Foe was born in the heart of London in the parish of St. Giles, Cripplegate, about the year of the restoration of Charles II. He grew up during the period of greatest repression of nonconformists, learned to read on the Bible as a child, piously copied out large sections of it in shorthand when a rumor went around that the highchurchmen were going to confiscate the dissenters' sacred books, and, being deemed a likely youngster by his family, was sent to the academy at Newington Green, under a divine named Morton (who moved to America later and became a vice-president of Harvard College), to study for the ministry. Young Daniel's bent turned out rather for this world than for the next, so he was taken out of the academy and apprenticed to a wine merchant. In connection with the business, he traveled in Spain and Portugal and probably in the Low Countries, rose rapidly in the world, got caught in the speculative fever of the time, and became such a successful business man that he failed before he was thirty for the sum of £17,000. Meanwhile, his nonconformism had taken political form. He had written Whig pamphlets and "ridden out" with Monmouth's premature and short-lived rebellion against the last Stuart, and on the great day of William of Orange's entry into London had been seen, wearing a new wig and an elegant *surtout*, riding a fine horse in the Protestant Monarch's train.

But the England that emerged from under the courtly brilliance and the bloodshed of eighteen years of Stuart reaction was no longer the rapidly evolving fluid society of Elizabeth and of the Commonwealth. It was the "tight little island" of highly stratified castes that continued almost to our own day. At the bottom was the great mass of laborers and tenants, disfranchised, illiterate and helpless, a prey to press gangs and recruiting sergeants and to laws against change of residence or association, under the direct, often paternal, but always absolute rule of the magistrates and country squires. In the early years of the eighteenth century, a period of rising prosperity, wages tended, it is true, to rise in relation to the price of wheat, so that the working class was possibly economically in better shape than in the century before, but opportunity for a working man to improve his station was almost nil.

Immediately above the working class came the stratum that Defoe and Franklin came from, the dissenting tradesmen and artisans, the undestroyed remnant of the defeated Commonwealth. They were barred by law from holding office, and separated from the rest of the community by differences in social and religious habits. Above them came the landowning gentry, who governed the country districts through the assizes as justices of the peace, whose sons went to the universities and made up the personnel of the great institutions of the Law and the Established Church. These county families were already allying themselves with the rich bankers and merchants and shipowners of the towns, with that "commercial interest" now beginning to be mentioned that was to grow in importance until it swallowed everything else.

In ermine and coronets at the very top sat the old nobility. The peers had lost their feudal and military

[1] This is the second of two articles on Franklin and Defoe: a chapter from a forthcoming book on the splitting-off of the American tradition from England. — THE EDITORS

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prerogatives but were powerful as great landowners and through their right to sit in Parliament. Their House of Lords, however, through the influence of the bishops and the creation of new peers for political purposes by whatever party happened to be in power, was beginning to represent the great institutions, the Law, the Church, the Court, as such, rather than hereditary power. Feudalism in the continental sense had been broken up in England under the Tudors.

The ladders for ascent to these upper levels of society, as the eighteenth century opened, were already pretty much established for individuals of exceptional energy as the universities, the Church, the House of Commons, the acquisition of land: for a dissenter like Daniel Foe there was no way of reaching even the foot of any of those ladders.

After his bankruptcy he had to hide out for a period, first in the sanctuary round the Mint and later in Bristol, where, as bailiffs and process servers only operated on weekdays, he was able to come out for a walk on Sundays and, noticeable on account of his elegant dress and fashionable manner, was known to the townspeople as the Sunday Gentleman. Eventually he managed to satisfy his creditors and to get back to London.

He already had taken up the habit of picking up a little money by writing when business got bad. He caught the attention of his idol, King William, by the satirical poem, "The True Born Englishman," which broadly took off the perennial prejudice against foreigners, and was rewarded for his faithfulness to the constitutional monarchy by a couple of small positions, those of director of a lottery and collector of a tax on glass works and, so he tells us, by the personal friendship of the subtle Hollander himself. It was possibly under William that he started the backstairs information bureau for the government he conducted during several subsequent reigns. In spite of his bankruptcy, he was very much the prosperous merchant at this time, with a mistress and a country house at Tilbury and a small yacht of his own on the Thames.

He was forging boldly ahead as one of the leaders of the king's party, when King William's horse stumbled and threw him when he was riding in the park. All over England Tories and Jacobites drank the health of the horse. Only the dissenters were really devoted to the House of Orange. William was already in bad health and never recovered from his injuries. After the death of his royal idol nothing ever went completely well with Daniel De Foe. Somewhere during his rising fortunes he had managed to get the French particle into his name. He clung to it through good times and bad. It was the only acquisition he never lost.

The reign of Queen Anne came in like a lion. The queen was a sickly, querulous creature very much under the thumb of her women friends and of "high-flying" Tory divines. Her one passion was for the Church, for Laud's Church of England that taught passive obedience to the monarchy and touching for the king's evil. The Jacobites felt that her reign was the great chance to restore the Stuart line and the good old times. The Roman Catholics, encouraged by her highchurchiness, were raising their heads hopefully. The country gentlemen of the Tory Parliament felt that the time had come to squelch the nonconformist tradespeople who had been getting too uppity during the last reign.

Defoe jumped with both feet into the row by publishing a pamphlet called "A Short Way with Dissenters," which anticipated the ironic method of Swift's "Modest Proposal" for solving the Irish question by selling steaks off Irish babies. The pamphlet suggested a series of measures that would have put every nonconformist in England in jail. The high-flying divines fell into the trap and took Defoe's recommendations seriously. The dissenters themselves were too scared by the fire and brimstone being breathed out against them to appreciate the joke. Defoe found himself in hot water indeed. In spite of abject apologies and of his very characteristic offer to raise a regiment of horse and go fight for the queen in the Low Countries, he was arrested and sentenced to the pillory and to imprisonment at the queen's pleasure. There followed one of those explosions of popular feeling that have made and kept England a free country throughout the centuries in spite of despotic laws, a rigid caste system and the dominance of the property interest. Defoe's exposure in the pillory turned into an ovation. Instead of emptying chamber pots on his head and throwing rotten vegetables at him, the townspeople of London drank his health in mugs of ale, and brought him nosegays. Hawkers did a land-office business selling copies of his "Hymn to Pillory" and, the last day he was brought out, the pillory itself was wreathed in flowers. The joke was turned back on the Tory divines.

In the excitement there was a Cabinet shake-up and a moderately whiggish country gentleman from Devonshire named Robert Harley got into the saddle. Harley came from a Puritan family. He had been Speaker of the House of Commons when Defoe was riding to prominence at the head of friends of good King William at the time of the Kentish petition. While Defoe was in jail, strings were being pulled in his behalf by William Penn and other highly placed friends of toleration, and Harley, who understood the power of the press, got the idea that Defoe's writing might be useful to him. After much devious negotiation, Defoe emerged from prison the editor of The Review and Harley's backstairs confidant.

Meanwhile Defoe's latest commercial venture, a tile factory, had gone to smash and with it his hopes of a really respectable business career. Swift, too, was to work for Harley, but he went in to see the minister by the front door, as befitted a learned churchman, while Defoe had to use the tradesmen's entrance. Swift

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wrote for the court and the universities and the literate gentry. Defoe wrote for the business men and artisans and apprentices of London. In the end Swift pulled a deanery out of his work; all Defoe got for infinitely greater service was a wavering subsidy and a furtive career under continual threat from bailiffs and magistrates.

During the years of Harley's administration it was Defoe's job to explain his policies to the commercial interest in The Review. Meanwhile he traveled continually about the country looking into the state of public opinion and feeling out the electoral inclinations of the dissenters in the small towns. While Harley was engineering the Act of Union he transferred his activities to Scotland. When Harley turned his coat from moderate Whig to moderate Tory, Defoe and his publications turned with him. Meanwhile he went in for endless speculations on the side, always sure that this time he'd be in the money, and published, for small change, occasional narratives of current happenings like "Some Account of the Late Storm" and the magnificently written "Apparition of Mrs. Veal."

Defoe was the first writer to understand and to appreciate the possibilities of that great gold mine of journalism: the middle-class public, just as Robert Harley was the first statesman to appreciate its political importance. The fortunes of the two men became inseparable. When Harley went into eclipse Defoe's income suffered, though he managed haltingly to carry on his various and devious activities under Harley's associate, Godolphin. When Queen Anne died and Harley was sent to the Tower, Defoe immediately found himself haled into court.

The wind of the new dynasty filled the sails of the Whigs. Like his patron, Defoe had managed to get in wrong with both parties, but especially with the Whigs, who felt he had ratted on them. The long administration of Robert Walpole initiated the rule of the Whig squirarchy, and Defoe's journalistic and political career was over. His business speculations had been pretty generally failures. To support his family in the suburban retirement of Stoke Newington, he turned altogether to writing and published volume after volume of educational and improving reading for the middle class. His "Family Instructor," as well as being used by every butcher, baker and candlestick maker in the country, was used by the House of Hanover in the education of the royal children. The period of the great leveling of the mind through journalism had begun.

Defoe was already a man in his late fifties when he started on the series of sturdy narratives which, starting with "Robinson Crusoe" in 1720, expressed so perfectly the ethics, the aspirations, the day dreams of crime and adventure, and the daily realities of the life of the rising commercial class. The books were enormously read, but Defoe himself remained all his life the not quite respectable speculator, the fly-by-night journalist, the backstairs intelligence agent. He never gave up the gambler's hope for the golden throw that would make him rich and respected and would raise his family into a higher sphere. His ship never came in.

He lived on far into the century, a miserable, peevish old man continually rowing about money matters with his relatives, full of secret schemes and combinations for moneymaking that grew more and more fantastic as his mind weakened. In the last year of his life he ran away from home, frightened by some fancied or real threat of blackmail or of seizure for debt, and died hiding out alone in a London lodging house.

Franklin in America, meanwhile, a man of fairly similar background and makeup, was swept up into financial ease by the booming growth of Philadelphia, and found ample room to develop his rich and diverse interests, becoming, as an old man, one of the great and rounded and dominant characters of the century. Dr. Franklin, the philosopher, could meet on a basis of moral and intellectual equality all the powerful men of the period, without giving way before any of the cramping restrictions of caste or station. In situations where Defoe had to stand cringing with his hat in his hand, Franklin could walk serenely into the drawing room wearing his backwoodsman's beaver cap instead of the wig that European etiquette demanded. It is hard to overestimate the advantage Americans in the eighteenth century had in growing up with only the sky over their heads. The slum life of London cramped and warped the great men of the rising business class in England like a ghetto. When they managed to rise above their station, it was only by conforming to all the preconceived deformations of the ruling squirarchy. The defeat of the Commonwealth in the last century had been the defeat of a whole nation. The rise to empire of the gentry through the prosperous years of successful trade and booming manufactures and lucky wars and conquests left the tradesmen and artisans where they were, and depressed the working class into the situation Marx was to describe in the middle of the nineteenth century. Only in America were Englishmen able to make real the hopes and possibilities that had been latent in the fervently personal religion of individual conscience and in the discussions and searchings of the men of the Commonwealth. At the end of the century, the thirteen colonies were to win their independence and lay the foundation of a new nation, because Americans had, man for man, more opportunity for growth and development than their blood relations in the crowded British Isles, where every man's life was hemmed into established paths by deep-rooted privileges and interests. It was as if the air the Americans breathed was fresher and more lifegiving.

JOHN DOS PASSOS

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# Washington Notes

## Third-Term Line-up

IN THE WORDS of the men around him, one of Mr. Roosevelt's long-distance objectives has always been to remake the Democratic Party into a "liberal political instrument." As far as the rank and file of such a party goes, the 1940 election comes close to signifying success. Except for the South, Mr. Roosevelt seems to have attracted industrial workers, big-city white-collar workers, intellectuals, across the whole nation. And in the South, he has apparently driven away a good many reactionaries, backward-lookers. The act of Senator "Cotton Ed" Smith in South Carolina, and Vice President Garner in Texas, in refusing to go to the polls on election day, was probably copied by thousands of lesser-known Southern political leaders. The Democratic Party is beginning to show a definite, coherent liberal following, and is beginning to shuck off its eighty-year-old regionalism.

If a political party is to endure, however, it must have organization. From 1932 until last July, the chairman of the Democratic Party's National Committee was Mr. James A. Farley; one of its vice-chairmen is still Mayor Hague of Jersey City. For eight years, the National Committee has been dominated by big-city bosses and Southern Senators, and its regularly employed staff has been made up of their lieutenants. Only the women's division, under Mrs. T. F. McAllister—who was Mrs. Roosevelt's appointee—has reflected the New Deal philosophy. At the Chicago convention in July, the New Dealers tried, and failed, to capture the National Committee, and to oust its Farley-selected personnel. Subsequently, Mr. "Chip" Robert, engineer-holder of PWA and defense-plant contracts, was pushed into resigning. But the Farley group in the Committee remained substantially untouched through the campaign.

Presumably Mr. Flynn, Mr. Farley's successor, will continue to have the national chairman's title. But will Mr. Roosevelt and his New Deal advisers undertake the immensely urgent task of remaking the Committee's membership? The returns show that "Kelly-Hague-Flynn" was beaten in the election quite as certainly as Mr. Willkie himself. Mayor Kelly made a pitiable showing—so feeble, indeed, that it cost the Democrats the Illinois governorship—and Mr. Hague's Hudson County plurality was far under his preëlection boasts. While Mr. Flynn did well enough in his native Bronx, New York City as a whole had a Democratic plurality about 400,000 below the 1936 figure. Mr. Roosevelt and the New Dealers owe these three gentlemen nothing.

The burden of the 1940 campaign, until Mr. Roosevelt entered it, was carried by Federal Security Administrator McNutt, Attorney General Jackson and by the Roosevelt Independent Committee, of which Mayor LaGuardia and Mr. Corcoran were the principal figures. These men, and the groups they gathered around them, won the 1940 election. They ought to be entrusted with the job of rebuilding the party machinery.

Partly because of Mr. Roosevelt's long recognized inability to fire subordinates, it is believed that the third-term Cabinet will show few changes. The most doubtful case is that of Secretary Hull. The tale of differences between Mr. Hull and Under-Secretary Welles has been widely and extravagantly publicized, and it has long been predicted that the President would put Mr. Welles in Mr. Hull's job. There is a great deal of evidence to show that Mr. Welles, personally, is much closer to Mr. Roosevelt than Mr. Hull has ever been. Probably it is also true that Mr. Welles has a natural, entirely legitimate ambition to wear Mr. Hull's shoes if the latter should ever wish to retire. But all this is a long way from saying that Mr. Hull will not be reappointed in January—particularly after his powerful help in the last days of the campaign.

There are three other possibilities for Secretary of State: Mr. Bullitt, who is probably on more intimate terms with Mr. Roosevelt than any of his rivals; Mr. Berle, who, as a member of the American Labor Party, symbolizes Mr. Roosevelt's labor and liberal support; Mr. Messersmith, Ambassador to Cuba. The latter is the hero of the younger New Dealers, who regard him as the firmest, most consistent enemy of appeasement in all its forms. Should Mr. Hull decide to withdraw, however, it seems most likely that Mr. Welles will succeed him, with Mr. Bullitt taking the ambassadorship to England in place of Mr. Kennedy.

Secretary Stimson came to Washington on the understanding that he would be asked to remain only until the munitions program was under way, and the preliminaries of the draft completed. He is believed to wish to resign; if he does so, his close friend and the present Under-Secretary of War, Mr. Patterson, probably will succeed him. Secretary of the Navy Knox is said to be eager to stay on.

At the time it was made, Mr. Wickard's appointment as Secretary of Agriculture was understood to be merely for the duration of the campaign. However, as has so often happened with Mr. Roosevelt's stop-gap appointments, there is no reason to suspect that he will not remain Secretary indefinitely. The two most obvious candidates for the post are Mr. Thacher, Washington spokesman for the Farmers' Union and a great favorite at the White House, and Mr. O'Neal, head of the Farm Federation. Since many of Mr. O'Neal's associates in the Farm Federation, after supporting Mr. Roosevelt in 1932 and 1936, switched to Mr. Willkie in this year's campaign, his star has lost much of its earlier brilliance. Attorney General Jackson is now, beyond question, first choice for the next Supreme Court vacancy; meanwhile, of course, he will continue in his present post. Miss Perkins' popularity among all factions of labor is as faint as it has always been, but, because of Mrs. Roosevelt's protecting arm, she will probably stay.

Much the most important appointment in prospect is that of a chairman of the NADC. It is understood that Mr. Knudsen has privately said that he preferred to continue as production manager, and did not want the boss job. Nevertheless, he is the odds-on candidate. If the choice were left to the NDAC's officials, probably the second and third choices would be Mr. Nelson and Mr. Henderson. However, a powerful faction of New Dealers has urged that Mr. Justice Douglas leave the Supreme Court and become the New Deal's captain in the defense effort.

*Washington* T. R. B.

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# Young Man with a Horn Again

IT IS ALMOST TEN YEARS since Bix Beiderbecke died, shortly after his twenty-eighth birthday; it is at least twelve years since he played the bulk of his music. But he is as new and wonderful now as he was in those fast days on the big time, the highest expression of jazz when jazz was still young, the golden boy with the cornet he would sometimes carry around under his arm in a paper bag. Columbia has just reissued some of the famous recordings (Album C-29; 8 ten-inch sides, $2.50). They aren't the half of it, not the tenth of what was recorded, of course; and most of them aren't even among the best. But Columbia has acquired some of the masters of the old Okeh company, and now resurrects "Royal Garden Blues," "Goose Pimples," "Thou Swell," etc., for those with ears.

I suppose the kids growing up in the belief that Glen Miller is what it really takes to blow the roof off would wonder, in the midst of this rather dated small-band clamor, what they were listening to and why. Well, it's just jazz, kids, and as far as the groups in general go, not the best of its period. But Bix, the fellow riding above and ahead and all around with that clear-bell horn, Bix had swing before the phonies knew the word. He had it at its best and purest, for he had not only the compelling lift of syncopation, the ease within an intense and relentless rhythm; he had music in a way of invention that is only found when you find a good song, inevitable, sweet and perfect. He could take off out of any chord sequence, any good or silly tune, and wheel and lift with his gay new melodic figures as free of strain in the air as pigeons. He had a sense of harmonic structure that none can learn and few are born with; he had absolute pitch and absolute control of his instrument—in fact, no trumpet player I've ever heard could be so reckless and yet so right, so assured in all the range from tender to brash, from sorrow to a shout; his tone was as perfect without artifice as water in the brooks, and his lip and tongue and valve-work so exact in all registers that he could jump into a line of notes and make it sound like he'd slapped every one of them square in the face. With this technical assurance, he never had to cramp and plan and fuss himself: he could start at any point, and land on a dime.

This makes it sound too tossed off. He worked on his music, and worried always. Any jealous little stinkfinger (and there were plenty around to envy and fear his talent) could always bring him down by low-rating the thing he'd just played; any musician who had something was the object of his admiration. He never got over feeling uneasy about his lack of facility in sight reading—but it was too natural and easy to play it by ear. He had a memory in music like nobody's business, and could and at certain hilarious times did imitate a corny solo just preceding his, so closely note for note that the only one who wasn't holding his sides was the soloist himself, who figgered that young feller was rarin' to go.

I don't know anybody who did more in the way of opening up the set rhythm of jazz. Everything is written in four-four time, and the pace can be said to vary through twelve or fifteen standard tempos, from slow-drag to fast-jump. But Bix as he went along actually wrote his own time signature over the implied beat for dancing, by subtleties of phrasing, by delayed attack or a quick rush on ahead, and by the varying duration of a note.

It was no mere gut-bucket, emotion without control, virtuosity without pattern, louder and faster and higher. He sweat, and for all the ease of his solo in flight, the men around him would see the lines tighten in his face every time he stood up. One of the easy remarks in jazz is: He played it fifteen times, every one different. Bix played it different, all right. But when he got just the note of the chord, just the intervals, just the main line the way he wanted—that was his structure and there couldn't be a better, so why go off into new scales and razz-mah-tazz? At times—and you can hear it proved on half a dozen records—he would get a way of playing for the brass section and have the arranger leave that chorus blank; then he would get the boys together outside and play a phrase and then another, and then go back and play it in chords, patiently, carefully, just as he used to do with the glee club back in grade school in Davenport, note for note and chord for chord, until that part of the arrangement was a section in solo, established in the book and no need for writing. It couldn't be written anyway.

And all of this makes him sound too perfect, as well, like a church-going cousin always being thrown up in your face. He was perfect only in music, and in the simple goodness and loyalty that was always there under the rusty tux with the soup stains, the underwear and sox you never could get off him for sending to the laundry until they fell off, and he'd borrowed them from you in the first place, like as not. As a kid he had wanted to be Douglas Fairbanks; he kept himself in trim and was great at skating, swimming, jumping over walls and the like, an all-around first in his neighborhood, and so generally hardy that an old sweater was all he found necessary for an Iowa winter. But music as it became a profession and almost a religion shut out his concern for just about everything else. Things were always happening to him, partly because he couldn't spare the time to study about them—missing the train, losing his tie, falling off the stand in a whirlwind of music racks, getting thrown out of the hotel.

Of his considerable achievements as a rumpot, people still speak with wonder and endlessly, and there were indeed some funny times, before the dark days. But one of his troubles was a capacity rare in brass men: he could tie quite a handsome one on without going technically fuzzy and lip-numb, so that he could stand up and get off those clear round notes as innocent as pie, and then solemnly take his seat in the middle of the whole boilerworks of a drummer's outfit. He lacked a natural brake in that; and his constitution was so good to start with that he wasn't retarded physically until he'd blown the fuse on the whole works. Also, he could make as big money as you want without having a dime, a very rough man on a dollar bill. Also, while no one ever suffered musical fools more gladly, stood by for and worked over them, he had no use for any stuffed shirt in music or anything else, except as a target for a slingshot. He'd run into any such rich spreading trees as quick and head-on as the horse in the fable: he wasn't blind, he just didn't give a damn.

The story of his musical career is outlined in the book "Jazz Men" about as well as it can be. The dates, the cities,

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the things done, the people met are established enough by now for a pattern, if only in fragments. But he had started in music early, and there is not so much known about that. His family was well off; his father was a good solid lumber merchant; his mother an amateur musician. There was always a piano in the house and there was a phonograph when few people had them. Bix (his real name was Leon Bismarck, for it was a family of German-American extraction) was a perfectly normal boy, except that he was always fussing around with music. He had a sister and an older brother, who was enough a hero to him so that he swiped the nickname Bix from him, and would not part with it. He lived in a big house across a sloping playground from the school, and the school was more a center of life than schools usually get to be.

There was the playground, the sliding and skating and wrassling, but there was also a lot of singing: the kind of spontaneous thing where a whole grade of kids will enjoy their cantatas and what-not so much that they not only start a ball rolling through the classes in general but work at it and get pretty good. They used to have the run of the school at night for rehearsal; they used to have a barber-shop quartet out on the fire-escape. In one grade they wanted a piano for their own room, so they arranged a local concert, which was so successful they gave another, and before the year was out they had the piano, bought and paid for. One of those happy things that cannot be incubated, taught or fostered.

Anyhow, Bix went through all the grades without being kept back, and in this social-musical atmosphere he was the number-one boy. Anything he heard he could play on the piano; anything he could play he could figure out the parts for, and teach the others to sing in chords. He liked music and music liked him and gave him a place, and the world was very young. Then on top of that, first off the crank-winding phonograph and later up the river from New Orleans in boats, came jazz, with horns. He got a cornet and taught himself to play it, for that was the kind of instrument it took to blast out this new thing in music. He got quite a little drunk on the excitement of it and did not want to be Douglas Fairbanks any more. His family began to worry about him, for it was one of those happy families that enjoy their group with pride and a fierce concern that it shall have the best. They sent Bix from high school to Lake Forest Military Academy, thinking to get him away from the bad balance of nothing but music. But Lake Forest was near Chicago, and Chicago was jazz then. It was as though jazz were a house that had been built just for him. And he moved in.

I was no intimate, but I think I could say in general why he blew up. It was partly the pace, of course, and taking it too fast. He began to see little fellows with green beards walking up and down on his chest, and Whiteman sent him back to Davenport, to get squared up. He was too far gone for any working band at that time, which was 1928. At home, he came out of it. He was shaky but still good, and he jobbed around with his old friend from grade-school, Larry Andrews, and watched his hand when he held it out every morning to see if it still looked as though he were waving at somebody. He had been at the top but somewhere along the line, some time or other, he'd taken a fall. And he wasn't sure in his own heart he would fit back there again, even if he stayed off brass rails. He was honestly anxious. Was it just liquor that had pulled the knife on him? Maybe it was something else too?

It was, all right. He lifted his horn over the sixty-odd dancers or the beer tables of this cover-your-expenses circuit, and the other musicians (if no one else) would shake their heads and marvel; and it was the same as in the first days when he showed up in an Indiana town where the boys had thought they were really going, and played a few sets, and as one of them reports today, a day in which he is pretty famous, "I tell you the tears stood in my eyes, I couldn't get out the next number in the book."

He stayed on the wagon and the music was as good as ever—which he proved later on the last recording date he had before he died, with Hoagy Carmichael's pick-up band. But what he couldn't see, the nameless thing that was his trouble, had got him down. First he'd wanted to be "as good" as the men out front whose music had excited him. Then he wanted to stay good, and be if possible better. This was a preoccupation to bridge the years from the rusty clangor of the Wolverines to the bright lights of the Goldkette and Whiteman shows; this and the handy gin pitcher kept him assuming that if he felt low and the road ahead was flat and lonesome, it was just a hangover, just feeling low, let's sick a hare on the hound that bit me. Actually something else had been creeping up, something he never saw clearly. He had come to the top like a cork, and he had no more place to go.

And still he had to be going, he had to travel, so completely a musician that music was his ticket and there was no other line. He didn't go much for women. He was loyal, true and happy in his friendships with men, even self-effacing, but his friends were, after all, musicians. It had to be music for him, and as far as he could see when he could see, he wanted neither the money, nor the place, nor the show. But what else? He dreamed of being a composer. He had written some piano pieces and he wanted to do something even more ambitious. But what? He had no equipment, not the kind of equipment that a so-called legitimate musician acquires from study of the great body of Western music, which has had its best time in other times and is now gone fairly sterile. He didn't know what to do, and listened with awe to Debussy records (Debussy is for some strange reason a great favorite of good jazz men), and would sequester himself and sit morosely at the piano, fingering the chords of a new music without being able to reconcile the old, which he didn't comprehend, with the new, which was in him as natural as a voice in your throat and which he had spent his brief lifetime tuning for song.

From the top of folk music as folk music, there is no place to go, actually. Jazz is a folk music, but Bix had never taken time out to think of things like that: jazz was the country where he grew up, the fine high thing, the sun coming up to fill the world through the morning.

He never heard about what was troubling him and only knew it was trouble. He came back to the big time eventually, but he could no longer stay on it, he played here and there, hole and corner, but he was too unreliable now for the standard type of show—and the big time was letting jazz go underground quietly by these days, for whatever life there had been in bands like Pollack, Goldkette, Whiteman in 1927-28 was no longer in demand by 1930, and

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even the great jumping Negro outfits were either breaking up or hightailing off to Europe. Bix played for dances and recordings, and went back to the bottle and was not seen in the better places; and even moped around fearing he had lost his sense of perfect pitch; but when he lifted that stumpy dented cornet at the fraction of the second after the release, for dancing or just for the record in a dead studio, it came tumbling and leaping out as complete and lovely as ever. What he could always do he could still do, from the jazz-band tone to sadness. But what he had was more than enough, and he didn't know where to put it.

Perhaps you will have to hear him a lot; perhaps you won't have any ear for the jazz music that grew up around you and in your time, and so will never hear the voice, almost as if speaking; but there is something in these records that goes beyond a mere instrument or the improviser on it, some unconquerable bright spirit that leaves no slops even in confusion and defeat and darkness gathering; some gallant human thing which is as near to us as it is completely marvelous, and which makes only just and apposite that end of a career so next to the heart of all who would like this country to be a country of happy people, singing. In the summer of 1931 Bix Beiderbecke got out of a sick bed, and against the best advice, to ride a rickety bus to a place some fellows were playing a dance. He had promised the fellows he would go for the date, which would fall through if there were not some stubby cornet lifting over the boys and girls on the floor, and through the close air to the roof, some special glad thing to dance by. So he went, walking up to the bus and from the bus to the band room with that peculiar purposeful air of walking a straight line to some immediate destination, eyes going neither left nor right. He had promised to play; he played, and music was around him like rain falling once more. That was all.

He got pneumonia out of it, of course, and died of that a few days later. That is, they buried the body. For those who had been around and those to come after there was something, grown in this country out of the Iowa dirt, that didn't die and could not be buried so long as there should be a record left in the world, and a turntable to spin it on.

OTIS FERGUSON

# The Bandwagon

"It is a long established policy at Drake," said Dr. Morehouse, "that controversial issues are not discussed on the campus." – *News story in The Des Moines Register.*

### Frothing Slightly at the Mouth?

Mrs. John Jacob Astor took off her hat and settled herself comfortably as the mannikins began to succeed each other in rabid succession. – *From an item printed in The New York Times.*

### Sure You Don't Mean Roosevelt?

For 100 years the President of the United States elected every twentieth year has died in office. Vice Presidents John Tyler, Andrew Johnson, Chester A. Arthur, Theodore Roosevelt and Calvin Coolidge entered the White House not by the conscious designation of American voters but by the accident of fate. . . .

We're voting for Willkie and McNary. – *From a leading editorial in The New York World-Telegram.*

### You Have Seen Their Faces

A half-dozen hit musicals. A horse show. A fresh ballet company. And everybody talking about the difficulty of getting tables at the best supper clubs. You'll always remember this season—as the winter you wore our silk-net extravaganza with its far-flung skirt and whimsical waist. – *From a Russek's advertisement in The New York Times.*

### The More-Than-Trojan Horse

In escaping, Jordan's horse is wounded, falls upon the man, and breaks his leg. He is too badly injured to be carried, and he must be left behind to do what damage he can with a light machine-gun, and then to end his life. – *From Alvah Bessie's review of "For Whom the Bell Tolls," printed in The New Masses.*

### Commercial-Candor Department

It is still impossible to print everything on the front page. For that reason The Herald urges you to look inside the paper. – *From the Hertford County (Ahoskie, N. C.) Herald.*

*Our readers are invited to contribute to this column; $1 will be paid for each item used. Address The Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. Please enclose the original clipping.* – THE EDITORS

# Correspondence

## Where the Gallup Poll Errs

SIR: I enclose a copy of a letter mailed to Dr. George Gallup on November 4.

*Pasadena, Calif.* UPTON SINCLAIR

[ENCLOSURE]

Dear Dr. Gallup: I have read your election poll published this morning, in which you show the candidates running neck and neck. I am writing this letter on Monday afternoon, before a single ballot has been cast, and I am going to venture a prediction, and when you get this letter you may have the privilege of laughing at me; again, maybe not. I have not taken any poll, and I am just going by what I have learned from watching the polls from the beginning.

You tell us this morning that your 1936 estimate was more than six percent off in favor of Landon and against Roosevelt. You say that you have tried to correct this, but you do not tell us how. I am recording my guess that you have failed. I do not believe the error can be corrected except by the procedure of allowing from four to six percent for the inevitability of the error in any class struggle such as this election.

The people who take the polls are human beings. Being educated, they are members of the educated classes. And no matter how hard they try, they cannot get away from the feelings of their class any more than they can get out of their skins. No member of the middle class likes to talk to people who are old, or tired, or sick, or discouraged, or ignorant, or stupid, or dirty, or ill smelling. The poor are all these things, not because they want to be, but because that is the nature of poverty. You may

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order your poll-takers to question the proper percentages of such persons, and they may honestly try, but they will fail because their instincts are working against them, and because of the physical difficulties of talking to the poor and understanding what they are trying to say. The poor are sick in bed, or they are busy with the housework and do not open the door, or they are not at home; they have tied the baby to the bedpost and gone off to look for a job scrubbing office floors. Or else they are afraid to talk to you. They hide their thoughts. Nobody pays any penalty for voting for Willkie, but many will pay a heavy penalty for voting for Roosevelt. Many such persons will list themselves among the undecided when as a matter of fact they know perfectly well that they are going to vote for Roosevelt.

The Literary Digest, as you know, polled the people who are in the telephone book and who owned automobiles. In my letter to them I said: It means that you are getting the rich old men of the community and not the poor young women. As a result, the Digest poll gave the victory to Landon. You have tried to get the poor young women by sending people to their homes, and you will come nearer to it than The Digest, but I am wagering that you have not corrected the six percent. On the showing of your poll I expect Roosevelt to get at least three hundred electoral votes, and more probably four hundred.

UPTON SINCLAIR

[The Gallup poll was only about three-percent inaccurate in its estimate of the total vote for President Roosevelt; but the Gallup error seems usually to favor the Republican Party. – THE EDITORS]

## On the Writing of History

SIR: In the August 5 issue of The New Republic Leonard Boudin in his review of "The American Presidency" commends Mr. Laski's "impressive acquaintance with American presidential history. The diaries of Polk and Hayes; the biographies of Harding, Coolidge and Mark Hanna; the studies of the presidential office by James Bryce in 'The American Commonwealth'; by Wilson before he achieved the office and by Taft afterwards, are but a few of his weapons."

One of the strangest things about this new book is the extent to which Mr. Laski depended upon W. E. Binkley's "Powers of the President" (1937) without any citing of it. Of the 28 footnote citations in the eleven pages following page 124, all but one may be found along with the matter cited on the following pages of Professor Binkley's work in exactly the following order: pp. 161, 162, 166, 176, 179, 193, 195, 199, 207, 209, 210, 215, 219, 225, 226, 235, 240, 243, 250, 251, 255, 265, 267, 286. Quotations of authorities are almost always identical and in at least half a dozen cases contain identical hiatuses.

Scattered through Professor Laski's volume are numerous instances of the uncredited appropriation of Professor Binkley's interpretations and conclusions, especially in the case of Presidents since the Civil War. The method used is usually condensation and paraphrase, but I have been unable to find a single citation from this study on which he depended to such a considerable extent.

STEWART ALSOP, Editorial Department,
Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc.

*New York City*

SIR: I am obliged to you for having sent me Messrs. Doubleday, Doran's letter for comment before you publish it. There are five observations I should like to make upon it.

1. I read Professor Binkley's book in Seattle in, I think, January, 1939. I found it, as my note of it shows, of real help as a bibliographical guide. In particular I owe to him the knowledge of two books and four articles which I do not think I should otherwise have found.

2. I do not possess his book, and, under present conditions, I cannot obtain access to it. I did not consult it when I wrote my book in England between May and October, 1939.

3. Of the twenty-seven quotations in my chapter on the President and Congress to which Messrs. Doubleday, Doran refer, they are the obvious quotations from such inescapable works as those of Bryce and Woodrow Wilson, the autobiographies of Theodore Roosevelt and Calvin Coolidge and those of Senators Hoar and Sherman; I do not think I owe them to Professor Binkley simply because, granted the thesis I was arguing, their citation is inevitable. I think I owe seven citations to material to which I was led by references I owe to Professor Binkley. On reflection, I think it would have been fitting for me to have referred to his book in this sense.

4. I fear that I am not conscious of the validity of the remaining point. I do not think Professor Binkley has a copyright on the conclusions that McKinley got on well with Congress, and that Harding and Coolidge left it the initiative, or that Mr. Hoover's power to lead was hampered by his conception of his office and by his personal unpopularity. These, Professor Binkley must forgive me for saying, are commonplaces known to every student.

5. My book contains a careful acknowledgment of the debts I felt while writing it to those who have discussed the problems with which my book is concerned, in particular to Professors Lindsay Rogers, Charles Beard and Thomas Reed Powell. To them and to Bagehot and Woodrow Wilson, I owe the real groundwork of its argument. I did not specifically mention Professor Binkley because—again he must forgive me—I was not conscious when I wrote my book, as I am not conscious now, of any serious debt to him. And any reader of my books over the last twenty years will, I think, realize that I do not avoid the acknowledgment of my debts.

HAROLD J. LASKI

*London, England*

## *From The New Republic Mail Bag*

Gerald D. Ullman and Arnold D. Roseman, roommates at Harvard Law School, got talking one night about our editorial paragraph, "Georgia Justice" (November 4) and, as lawyers will, disagreed in a wholehearted way. Mr. Ullman thought our legal reasoning miserable. Mr. Roseman thought it admirable. Both wrote briefs and sent them in. We think both briefs admirable (Mr. Roseman's, of course, a trifle more acute), and are miserable because we have space to print neither.

From Chapel Hill, North Carolina, Phillips Russell urges us to print more along the line of Malcolm Cowley's, "This Man's Army" (September 23). "Our hope of escape from a militarism along the old lines lies in the creation of a citizen army in which our young men can be fed mentally as well as physically, can continue their education, and can avoid brutalization at the hands of top sergeants on whom our West Pointers, steeped in British caste traditions, place the burden of licking 'em into shape." . . . Mr. Russell says more; and we shall have more to say on the subject also.

The Workers' Defense League reports urgent need for funds to appeal the case of Odell Waller, a young Negro sharecropper. Waller has been sentenced to death for the shooting of a farmer following a dispute over the sharing of a wheat crop. The WDL claims Waller shot in self-defense and says appeal funds must be in by November 19. They should be sent to the national office of the WDL, 112 East Nineteenth Street, New York City.

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# Books in Review

## The Boys in the Back Room: William Saroyan[1]

THE STORY becomes monotonous; but you have to begin by saying that Saroyan, too, derives from Hemingway. The novelists of the older generation—Hemingway himself, Dos Passos, Faulkner, Wilder—have richer and more complex origins, they belong to a bigger cultural world. But if the most you can say of John O'Hara is that he has evidently read Ring Lardner as well as Hemingway, the most you can say of Saroyan is that he has also read Sherwood Anderson (though he speaks of having looked into a book which he bought for a nickel at a bookstore and which was in Swedish and had pictures of churches). When you remember that Lardner and Anderson were among the original ingredients in Hemingway, you see how limited the whole school is.

But what distinguishes Saroyan from his fellow pupils is the fact that he is not what is called hard-boiled. What was surprising and refreshing about him when he first appeared was that, though he told the familiar story about the wiseguy who went into the bar, and I said and the bartender said and I said, the story was not cruel, but represented an agreeable mixture of San Franciscan bonhomie and Armenian Christianity. The fiction of the school of Hemingway had been full of bad drunks; Saroyan was a novelty: a good drunk. The peculiar spell exerted by his play, "The Time of Your Life," consisted in its sustaining the illusion of friendliness and muzzy elation and gentle sentimentality which a certain amount of beer or rye will bring on in a favorite bar. Saroyan takes you to the bar, and he creates for you there a world which is the way the world would be if it conformed to the feelings instilled by drinks. In a word, he achieves the feat of making and keeping us boozy without the use of alcohol and purely by the action of art. It seems natural that the cop and the labor leader should be having a drink together; that the prostitute should be a wistful child, who gets married by someone that loves her; that the tall tales of the bar raconteur should turn out to be perfectly true, that the bar millionaire should be able to make good his munificent philanthropical offers: that they should be really Jack the Giant-Killer and Santa Claus; and that it should be possible to croak the vice-crusader, who is trying to make everybody unhappy, as harmlessly as the devil in a children's "extravaganza."

These magical feats are accomplished by the enchantment of Saroyan's temperament, which induces us to take from him a good deal that we should not take from anyone else. With Saroyan the whole thing is the temperament: he hardly ever tries to contrive a machine. The good fairy who was present at his christening thus endowed him with one of the most precious gifts that a literary artist can have, and Saroyan never ceases to explain to us how especially fortunate he is: "As I say, I do not know a great deal about what the words come to, but the presence is always anxious that I take time out to say something. I say, What's there to say? And the presence says, Now don't get funny; just sit down and say something; it'll be all right. Say it wrong; it'll be all right anyway. Half the time I *do* say it wrong, but somehow or other, just as the presence says, it's right anyhow. I am always pleased about this. My God, it's wrong, but it's all right. It's really all right. How did it happen? Well, that's how it is. It's the presence, doing everything for me. It's the presence, doing all the hard work while I, always inclined to take things easy, loaf around, not paying much attention to anything, much, just putting down on paper whatever comes my way."

Well, we don't mind Saroyan's saying this, because he is such an engaging fellow; and we don't mind his putting down on paper whatever comes his way. It is true that he has a natural felicity of touch which prevents him from being offensive or tiresome in any of the more obvious ways; and his stories and soliloquies at their best have the quality of the spontaneous songs of one of those song-writers who finds the right melody for his feelings without knowing anything about music. But Saroyan is entirely in error in supposing that when he "says it wrong," everything is really all right. What is right in such a case is merely this instinctive sense of form which usually saves him—and even when he is clowning—from making a fool of himself. What *is* wrong, and what his charm cannot conceal, is the use to which he is putting his gifts. It is a shock for one who very much enjoyed "The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze" to go back to reading Saroyan in his latest collection, "The Trouble with Tigers." There is nothing in the book so good as the best things in "The Flying Trapeze," and there is a good deal that is not above the level of the facility of the daily columnist. In fact, a columnist is what William Saroyan seems sometimes in danger of becoming—the kind of columnist who depends entirely on a popular personality, the kind who never reads, who knows nothing in particular about anything, who merely turns on the tap every day and lets it run a column.

It is illuminating to compare this inferior stuff with the contents of a less well known collection published in California. This volume, "Three Times Three," seems to have been consecrated to miscellaneous pieces which the author regards as not having quite come off. The result is something a great deal more interesting than the slick and rather thin stuff of "Tigers." One of these pieces, "The Living and the Dead," of which Saroyan rightly says that it is not so good as it ought to be, seems to me, miscarry though it does, one of the best things Saroyan has written. The scene with the Armenian grandmother after the departure of the money-collecting communist is of a startling and compelling beauty. This theme of the foreign-born asserting in modern America the virtues of an earlier civilization is one of the principal themes in Saroyan; whenever it appears—

[1] This is the second of a series of articles on a group of American novelists, including James M. Cain, John O'Hara, John Steinbeck and Hans Otto Storm.

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as in the short story called "70,000 Assyrians"—it takes his work out of the flat dimensions of the wiseguy watching life in the bar; and here it is sounded with poignant effect. This is followed by an admirable scene, in which the young man walks out on the street and sees a child crying at a window, and reflects that for "the children of the world eternally at the window, weeping at the strangeness of this place," where the Communist must always look forward to a perfected society of the future, where his grandmother must always look backward to a world that has gone with her youth and that could never really have been as she remembers it, it is natural for them to escape to the "even more disorderly universe" of drunkenness, a state sad enough in itself. But the whole subject, with its three motifs, required a little doing; and Saroyan, as he admits, did not do it. He would have had to be more serious, and he would have had to work the thing out with care; and he knows that he can get away with an almost infinite number of lesser pieces without having their second-rateness complained of.

Kipling said one very good thing about writing: "When you know what you can do, do something else." Saroyan *has* tackled in his plays something larger and more complicated than his stories; but these plays seem to be yielding to a temptation to turn into columns, too. The three which have been produced and published[1] have many attractive and promising features in a vein a little like J. M. Barrie's; but George Jean Nathan, in the November American Mercury gives rather a disquieting account of no less than five more Saroyan plays which have already been tried out. There was a report that Mr. Nathan had been attempting to get Saroyan to acquaint himself with a few of the classics of the theatre, and it sounds as if the attempt had come to nought.

In the meantime, Saroyan goes on with his act, which is that of the unappreciated genius who is not afraid to stand up for his merits. This only obscures the issue. Most good artists begin by getting bad reviews; and Saroyan has been rather remarkably fortunate. Let him set his mind at rest. Everybody who is capable of responding to such things appreciates what is fine in his work. The fact that a number of people who do not know good theatrical writing from bad do not enjoy Saroyan is no excuse for the artist to neglect his craft. He will be judged not by his personality act or by his ability to get produced and published—which he has proved to the point of absurdity; but by work that functions and lasts.

With his triumph there has crept into Saroyan's work an unwelcome suspicion of smugness. One had always had the feeling with his writing that, for all its amiability and charm, it has had behind it the pressure of a hard and hostile environment, which it has required courage to meet, and that this courage has taken the form of a debonair kidding humor and of a continual affirmation of the fundamental kindliness of people—a courage which, in moments when it is driven to its last resources and deepest sincerity, calls upon its assurance of the loyalties of straight and simple people—Armenians, Czechs, Greeks—surviving untouched by the hatreds of an abstract and complex world. In Saroyan the successful playwright, for whom this pressure has been partially relieved, there seems to be appearing an instinct to exploit this theme of loving-kindness and of the goodness and rightness of things; and there is perhaps a just perceptible philistinism. If Saroyan, in his latest play, "Love's Old Sweet Song," has hit upon precisely the right way to make fun of Time magazine, he has, on the other hand, in his parody of "The Grapes of Wrath," come close to the familiar complacency which declares that the unemployed are unemployable. This is the path that leads to Eddie Guest, William Lyon Phelps and Dr. Frank Crane; and let not Mr. Saroyan deceive himself: no writer has a charmed life.

EDMUND WILSON

[1] Three Plays, by William Saroyan. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 146 pages. $3.

# Mr. Strachey's New Deal

*A Program for Progress, by John Strachey. New York: Random House. 312 pages. $3.*

THE COMMUNIST PARTY attracted its greatest following among the intellectuals at a time when it was belligerently calling for proletarian revolution. Subsequently it modified its position and began to urge a united front for democracy and against fascism. The intellectuals not only followed the party's lead; they became convinced out of their own experience that the Left could do with less intransigence and more common sense. Many of them became so convinced that the party was on the right track that, when they had to make the choice, they stayed with the track instead of the party. Of these casualties Mr. Strachey now becomes one of the most spectacular, for he not only has continued to believe in the united front but has gone ahead and worked out a logical program for it.

The conclusion he has reached, as set forth in this book, is simply that, if socialists cannot take power and establish socialism, they must accept responsibility for making capitalism work. Nothing could be more reasonable, in view of the experience of the British Labor Party, the Blum government and the New Deal, and yet few socialists seem to have learned the lesson. As Mr. Strachey shows, Fabian socialist parties, though merciful enough to the capitalists, have made their concessions at the wrong points, strengthening their enemies without achieving the recovery that would win them friends. On the other hand, as he does not show, the parties of the Third International subordinated the professed purposes of the united front to a strategy evolved in Moscow. Nobody really figured out what "the progressive forces"—the phrase, constantly used by Strachey, has a nostalgic ring—could and should do with power if they got it.

The first part of the book is devoted to a clear analysis of the capitalist system, in the light of the hypothesis, accepted by Mr. Strachey, that there is a declining rate of profit; the second is devoted to a brilliant study of the economics of the New Deal. The problem is to find measures that will increase consumption without destroying the profit motive and sending capitalism into a further decline. The solution, according to Strachey, is an expansionist program, consisting primarily in the distribution of new money to various enterprises and individuals. Like economists orthodox and unorthodox, he argues that expansionist measures will not be inflationary so long as resources are not being fully used. The New Deal he criticizes for not

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consistently following such policies and especially for not obtaining control of the banking system, which he regards as an indispensable preliminary step. Yet the New Deal has come closest to the program he recommends, and what he proposes is essentially the clarification and extension of the Roosevelt program.

Largely written before the war, the book was finished during the Sitzkrieg stage, when it was possible to expect a return to something like the status quo. Now that return is inconceivable for any part of Europe, and even in America, with billions of dollars being spent on armament, the problems are not going to be quite those Strachey discusses. Yet for America, and possibly for Europe if England wins, the book's general thesis is of even greater importance than Strachey supposed when he wrote it. The Communists scoff at his concern with a transitional program at a time when, they have convinced themselves, a revolutionary situation is developing everywhere. The question for many of us, however, is whether, in the world as it is today, a revolutionary situation can lead to anything but fascism. If that is true, we cannot permit the capitalist system to break down until we are ready to supplant it with a functioning socialism. This kind of program, then, instead of being a second-best substitute for revolution, as Strachey apparently thought when he wrote, becomes our only hope. We cannot believe as the Fabians did in the inevitability of gradualism, but we can believe in its necessity.

Quite as important as the creation of a program is the development of a political instrument. In "What Are We to Do?" Mr. Strachey argued for a united front dominated by a resolute, monolithic, Leninist party. The particular party he had in mind obviously is not going to do the job today, and it may be doubted whether that kind of party could ever do it. It may equally be doubted whether the Democratic Party, as such, will ever do it. Yet a great many Americans want what Strachey wants, and plenty of them are beginning to see that we have got to act soon, since economic reconstruction is a prerequisite of defense against fascism. We still have a chance, in other words, and we are not likely to have another. GRANVILLE HICKS

## Kapuzinerberg (Salzburg)

From the low eighteenth-century window—its thicknesses of pane and blind shut against the sun, its silence, the odor of summer through it—from the low window which reminds one so deliciously of Goethe retired, working, inspiring all Germany—from there—the cascades of hot trees in the morning already sick with future heat.

The great elms and chestnut trees of the garden falling one below the other do not blot out the view. To the right, the plain opening on Bavaria; opposite, a mixture of extraordinary mountains and convents and bell-towers; to the left, the squat Schloss which rises from another part of the town and from this point seems to adhere to the pale sky, through branches which are green banks of the atmosphere.

The town is invisible. But from this small airy house where I stand, it is so good to remember it! Beautiful faces of the centuries, how charming you are. Thoughts of all piteous men, and of those worthy of attention, beyond time and frontiers, how I love you.

*Translated by Louise Bogan* PIERRE-JEAN JOUVE

## Diaghilev and a Disciple

*Serge Diaghilev: An Intimate Biography, by Serge Lifar. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 413 pages. $5.*

THE RUSSIAN RENAISSANCE is a curiously lovely thing to look back at over one's shoulder, blending as it does priceless artistic magic with a touch of eerie futility and the pathos of its impending doom. Starting some fifty years ago with a revolt against the Russian "Victorian" era, it came to an end twenty-five years later; and the utilitarian and didactic tendencies of the sixties and seventies that had retreated for a short time, like a wave that leaves the wet sand aglow with painted pebbles, came rolling back with far greater force.

Among the many names connected with the Russian Renaissance, that of Diaghilev deserves honorable mention. Although not a creative genius in the precise sense of the term, his perfect taste in art, allied to a fascinating personality and to fiery energy in the promotion of what was finest in art, gives him a prominent place in the history of Russian culture. For this reason, Mr. Lifar's book is worth reading.

The book consists of two parts, the first dealing with the bare facts of Diaghilev's life—and for serious students of the Russian ballet, it will be quite sufficient to dip into these first 246 pages, where compilation prevails over original effort. True, there is too much of the good thing, and I for one have never been able to stomach these minute details of a biographee's infancy. But there is worse: Mr. Lifar's style is so pompous and long winded that it runs away with him. Such expressions as *divine, sublime, quest for the Holy City, memory of a distant heaven,* applied to an irascible gentleman in top-hat and silk muffler, who happened to possess a wonderful flair in the matter of dancing, may be put down to the devotion of a pupil to his master; but I refuse to be solemnly told that "childish memories persisted in Diaghilev all through his life," and that "in Benois' decor for the 'Götterdämmerung' [with which Diaghilev was not directly connected] it is as though some tiny corner of the Perm province haunts him [Diaghilev]."

His real achievement was that he knocked into shape and then showed the world that exquisite combination of movement, color and sound, the Russian ballet. His portly appearance was so "gentlemanly and aristocratic" that people turned back to look at him. The habit he had of smashing crockery and hotel furniture when slightly annoyed was partly responsible, perhaps, for the foreign conception of the Russian ego as exported abroad. His morals were frankly abnormal. He could be charming when he chose to smile. He bullied his dancers, blandly betrayed his friends and vilely insulted women. In later years he developed a mania for book-collecting, which Mr. Lifar deplores, but which seems to have been the most lovable trait in the man's character.

The second part of the book is devoted to what the author considers to be Diaghilev's best find: Serge Lifar. The meticulous noting of petty intrigues, the settling of private feuds, and a smirking, pretty-pretty, love-in-the-mystical note, hardly make pleasant reading, while the "intimate" details of the author's relations with Diaghilev (depicted, for instance, as an enormously fat old man

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clad in an old-fashioned nightgown and imitating for Mr. Lifar's benefit ballet steps in a double-bed hotel room) are revolting not merely in themselves, but also by reason of the clumsiness of Mr. Lifar's pen. Under these circumstances, the translator's task must have been arduous in the extreme, and no wonder his version lacks distinction—though on the whole it is a trifle less trite than the original Russian text. Still, I do not think that he ought to have been so misled by the elephantine shape of the word "compendious" as to use it in the sense of "large"; on the other hand, it is not his fault, but the author's, if certain other phrases come to grief. It is Mr. Lifar himself who says of a first-night success: "I was inundated with flowers, objects, fruit and letters." V. NABOKOV

# W. C. Williams as Novelist

*In the Money, by William Carlos Williams. Norfolk, Connecticut: New Directions. 382 pages. $2.50.*

"IN THE MONEY" is Part II of the projected long novel, "White Mule." The whole work is an experiment in applying to sociological fiction the strict objectivity and plastic effect that are Williams' *forte* as a poet. When the first instalment appeared in 1937, it proved to be a somewhat overelaborated version of a conventional plebeian story, and one complained that Williams was merely rewriting Dos Passos according to Imagist principles. With "In the Money," however, his experiment seems to be justifying itself. Either the material of this volume is more favorable in itself or else Williams is now better able to realize the possibilities of his story, for "In the Money" is a tense, finely written little novel of domestic and business life in the years of the first Roosevelt.

Part I dealt with the Stechers in their semi-proletarian phase. Part II relates the efforts of the German-born printer-hero to buck established capital and set up his own shop. Joe Stecher, who used to be a spokesman for labor, now represents small private enterprise in its contest with monopoly. He is the same shrewd, reticent, attractive plebeian, but his innocence seems to be taking leave of him as a result of his bitter experiences. In Joe's household, too, there is tension, as if the conflicts of the business life were reproducing themselves in that smaller world. Joe has a Norwegian wife, Gurlie, a kind of Molly Bloom, romantic, sensuous, aggressive, whose ego expands in proportion as her husband rises in the world. She begins to have dreams of travel and high life, and she is getting very sensitive and quarrelsome. There is a remarkable scene in which she sends her tragic old-country mother packing, and indeed she appears about to fly out of the family orbit altogether. Joe Stecher is a good character, too, and the Stecher children are almost clinically exact studies of small animals in the process of acquiring human masks; but Gurlie Stecher thus far is the life of "White Mule."

On the whole, Williams seems to be engaged not in turning up any new experience but in rehabilitating, on principle, the commonplace. And reliving the commonplace with Williams is a simple experience of the senses and sentiments, involving no challenge to our intellectual patterns. One may not agree that his literary program is quite the Great Mission that his most fanatic admirers represent it to be. But he does bring to his writing many fine gifts: an immaculate craftsmanship, an ear for common speech as exacting as Ring Lardner's, a physician's knowledge of people's behavior, a faculty for combining lyrical feeling with the most careful observation of reality. And Williams' precise realism is certainly a relief after the big murals of John Steinbeck and other belated workers in the American folk-epic tradition. F. W. DUPEE

# A Spokesman's Story

*Dusk of Dawn: An Essay Toward an Autobiography of a Race Concept, by W. E. Burghardt Du Bois. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 342 pages. $3.*

FOR MORE THAN SEVENTY YEARS, Dr. Du Bois has been acutely conscious of being a Negro. For about fifty of those years he has perfected himself in the difficult tactic of doing something about it for himself and his fellow Negroes. Born in New England and educated far beyond most white men, Dr. Du Bois has spent his life teaching, leading and writing. For twenty years as editor of The Crisis he met the problems of Negro life in the United States with a vigor that was stimulating to progress and hateful to reaction.

In the present book, Dr. Du Bois tries to explain his own life in terms of his race and to explain the problems of race in terms of his own biography. During his youth he believed that education would eradicate prejudice. Then he realized, much against his will, that the black world must continually fight for its freedom. But fighting violently, he always felt, meant defeat even in victory, and the First World War brought him this realization poignantly. He has also realized that the exploitation of black men by white men for the economic profit of the white men has been responsible for the taboos, restrictions and oppressions against black men by white men. Worldwide industrial imperialism is responsible for the domination of white Europe over black Africa and yellow Asia. "The echo of this industrial imperialism in America was the expulsion of black men from American democracy, their subjection to caste control and wage slavery."

Dr. Du Bois, however, does not believe that the American Negro can safely exchange his present chains for those of Communist dictatorship. His solution is rather that of a consumer's coöperative Negro society. He stresses the change in modern times from a producer's to a consumer's economy and urges the Negroes to exercise the one choice that is unrestricted for them, the choice to buy and consume what they please, to organize themselves and demand respect by their purchasing power. He denies that this is an advocacy of Negro segregation, so hateful to the equalitarians among Negroes. Dr. Du Bois feels strongly that the Negro must stop thinking of the days of thrift and private production and prepare himself gradually to play his part and protect his rights in the economy which is changing every day from individualist to communal effort. He points out that the class struggle is not a solution for the Negro, because he is discriminated against and excluded by both classes, and he believes that "the split between white and black workers was greater than that between white workers

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and capitalists." He wants the Negro to enter the white labor movement wherever he can and to fight for his rights within that movement, but also to bring to it forms of organization of his own wherever practicable, together with his own economic pressure as a consumer.

Dr. Du Bois believes that the extraordinary advance of the Negro people since emancipation "proves that down among the mass, ten times their number with equal ability could be discovered and developed, if sustained effort and sacrifice and intelligence were put to this task." His own life and theories as described so ably and stimulatingly in this book are proof of the potentialities of the educated Negro, if such proof was ever needed by people of intelligence.

M. R. WERNER

# A Reader's List

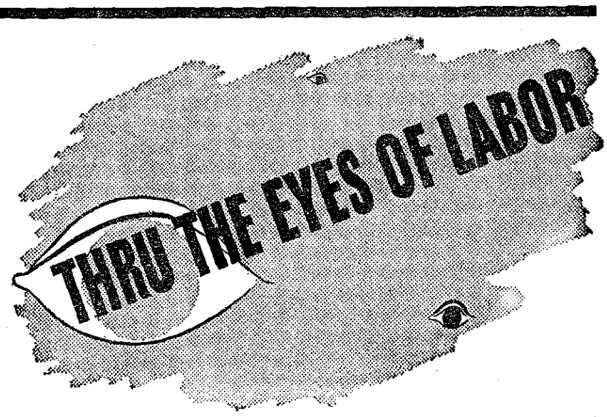
A HISTORY OF CHICAGO, by Bessie Louise Pierce (Knopf, $5). "From Town to City, 1848-71," the second of Dr. Pierce's four volumes about Chicago, tells of the lusty years between the first railroad and the fire of '71. Like Dr. Pierce's previous volume, this book truckles to no demand for "colorful personalities," but unearths genuine historical source material in a way that gives a full, rich picture of the development of the teeming city itself.

ENGINES OF DEMOCRACY, by Roger Burlingame (Scribner's, $3.75). The author of "March of the Iron Men" continues his fascinating "social history of the United States through invention" from Reconstruction down to 1938. Beginning with the steamship and ending with television and metallurgy, the vast panorama of American technology is presented with great journalistic skill and a wealth of information of permanent value. One may quarrel with Mr. Burlingame's overemphasis on Technology as the major factor of our social development and regret his rather loose philosophizings about the future, but his two handsomely illustrated and well documented volumes will have an assured place in the record of American achievement.

NATIONAL POLICY FOR RADIO BROADCASTING, by C. B. Rose Jr. (Harpers, $3). An examination of the authority of the Federal Communications Commission, and the disadvantages of a commercial-minded radio industry. The last chapter briefly suggests modifications of the system which would extend network facilities to non-serviced areas, eliminate "special interest" stations in favor of general interest, avoid political domination, combat conservatism in program material and encourage progressive public service.

TELEVISION BROADCASTING, by Lenox R. Lohr (McGraw-Hill, $3). The president of the National Broadcasting Company discusses the technique of television with special reference to the commercial, economic and production problems involved. The text and many illustrations are based on American experience, particularly that of the NBC. Professionals will be interested in the complete acting script of a Sherlock Holmes televised play, with all the technical directions.

SHOES, by Horace B. Davis (International Publishers, $2). Another in the "Labor and Industry" series, edited by the Labor Research Association. Discusses the effect on the shoe and leather worker of the dispersion of the industry, formerly concentrated in New England. Surveys wage, hour and occupational hazard conditions, as well as attempts at unionization.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THE WICKED BOOK OF BROTHER BARNABAS, by "a successful author who chooses to remain incognito" (Richard Smith, $2.75). A tract in defense of the New Deal and a militant policy against the aggressor nations, disguised as the whimsical story of a man who takes refuge in a poorhouse to meditate on ways of teaching patriotism to his countrymen. At a time when Rabelaisian has come to mean dirty, this book is Rabelaisian because it imitates the style of François Rabelais. François is still better.

### Fiction

ONCE IN MY SADDLE, by *David Lamson* (Scribner's, $2.50). Fourteen short stories by the author of "We Who Are About to Die," ten of them about farm life in western Canada twenty-five years ago. The mixture of sentiment, nostalgia and quiet humor is easy to take, even though common sense and the warmer human virtues triumph with uncommon regularity. Lamson misses fire when he gets away from the farm, except in "For Us the Living," a sensitive story about Nazi Germany.

LIGHT SONS AND DARK, by David Cornel DeJong (Harper's, $2.50). A somber, well written novel about the afflictions of rural life. Joel, who has been to college, does his best to make things click, but there is too much against him, including four useless older brothers, an unsavory father and the merest skeleton of a farm. By the author of "Old Haven."

CHINA TRADER, by Cornelia Spencer (John Day, $2.50). How a young Bostonian sets up the first American trading company in China. It's a tough assignment, China in the early 1800's being not precisely a haven for its few foreigners. An era overflowing with color and novelty, here allotted to a rather humdrum story.

THROUGH A WOMAN'S EYES, by *Zsolt De Harsanyi* (Putnam, $2.50). A new novel by the author of "The Star-Gazer," about the love life of a wealthy Hungarian heiress. It is a very long book, heavy with obsolete problems, aristocrats and rather gaudy romanticism.

## Contributors

HORTENSE LANDAUER SANGER lives in Dallas, Texas. She has contributed to The Saturday Review of Literature, The American Mercury, Voices, and Macmillan's Anthology, "Trial Balances."

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M. R. WERNER is the biographer of Bryan, Barnum and Brigham Young. His latest biography, "Julius Rosenwald," was published last year.


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